SKYLINE CAMPS

WALTER PRICHARD EATON

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Indian Basket Grass, near Gunsight Lake, Glacier Park

Skyline Camps

A Note Book of a Wanderer in Our
Northwestern Mountains

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By
Walter Prichard Eaton

Illustrations by
Fred H. Kiser

W. A. WILDE COMPANY, Publishers

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The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Fred H. Kiser, of Portland, Oregon, less for the photographs which illustrate this book, and which speak for themselves, than for the weeks of pleasant companionship on the high trails, and the skillful guidance into wild and pleasant places. Few people realize the hardihood and the love of the wilderness required to make a good nature photographer, both of which qualities Mr. Kiser possesses in eminent degree. He has led me into some ticklish places to get a picture, but they were always ten times more ticklish for him —and they were always worth it.

W. P. E.

SKYLINE CAMPS

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

HE memory is a curious thing—at least, mine is. In certain directions it scarcely functions at all. I cannot spell, I cannot remember names, it is only after several meetings that I can recall faces, and I possess a rather merciful ability to forget the plots of books and plays. Yet I can follow a trail through the mountains or the forest for a second time, after a gap of ten years (unless the lumbermen have been in during the interval), each guiding rock and tree, each dip and turn, coming back to me with the familiarity of a friend; I can draw a fairly accurate map of any golf course I have ever played; and I don't think I have forgotten completely a single one of all the camp fires I have built.

For that matter, however, who ever does forget his camp fires? With what joy, or perhaps relief, they are kindled, and with what wistful regret they are left behind, a pile of charred and water-soaked coals! There may be some people who camp from

a sense of duty, or resemble a man I once knew who sought for advice about "roughing it" in the West. We asked him how rough he wanted it, and he replied that of course he would desire a room with a bath. To such people this book is certainly not addressed, nor even to the de luxe camper sometimes encountered doing the regulation tour of our national parks, with everything but a cow in tow. Such a one I met in the Rocky Mountains, with a pack train staggering under all the comforts of home, from chamber to wine cellar. She was an authoress, and the following winter delighted her large urban (and suburban) following with her descriptions of the glorious, primitive life of the trail. However, her train went its way, and ours took another pass, dropping down into a wilderness of ghost-like cedars, the very wood where Hop-o'-my-Thumb scattered his crumbs. But the comments of our cook upon the party we had encountered would greatly enliven this page, had I the audacity to print them. It was this same cook—Dad, we called him—who remained behind when we broke camp one morning, to help one of the guides round up a horse that had strayed away in the night. That evening Dad rode into the new camp an hour behind us—alone.

"Where's Charlie?" we inquired.

"If God Almighty don't know where Charlie is any better'n I do, he's lost," Dad answered.

From which the general nature of Dad's remarks on the pack train de luxe may be inferred by any one remotely familiar with camp cooks in the great Northwest.

No, the reader who, I hope, will follow me over the skyline trails of our western mountains, where my memory kindles again those pungent fires of resinous wood, and the ice-water brooks go tinkling past in the mountain twilight, will be one who knows and loves the freedom of the wilderness, the silence of the high places, the exhilaration of conquest over glacial slope and precipice, and, above all, the profound and mystical peace which descends like a benediction on the day, when camp is made at last, when the fire reddens one tiny fragment of the star-bright dark, when a lone coyote howls in the distance, and this thing we call Civilization is less than the shadow of a dream.

I

In Glacier Park

STORM AND SHINE ON THE DIVIDE

MANY GLACIER HOTEL, an imposing and not unattractive structure built of western fir, sits on the shore of Lake McDermott, more than fifty miles from a railroad, facing as noble a mountain prospect as this continent affords. Directly across the lake, thrust eastward from the Continental Divide, is a sharp, pyramidal peak, dividing the panorama in half. To the left, a few miles back, the Divide rises to the great gray battlements of Mount Gould, and holds suspended on its upper shoulders the white field of Grinnell Glacier. To the right, the Swiftcurrent valley leads the eye again to the Divide, on this side dominated by the cone of Mount Wilbur. Over this mirror of green water, this sharp leap of pointed fir and pointed precipice, this more distant endless rampart of marching rock, of naked summit and ageless snow, broods a sky so clear, so utterly transparent, that the sunset colors are the tintings of eternity. And in this hotel the tourists gather to play at be-

ing followers of the high trails. It is an excellent place to rough it—with a room and a bath.

How well I recall one day when a stir went through the lobby at the news that a certain great man was arriving, a painter famous on two continents, now condescending to return to the continent which he had honored by choosing it for a birthplace, that he might confer a further honor by painting some of its scenery. We did not see him, however, until breakfast, a disastrous meal for him. In a word, the coffee. It was not right. The utmost efforts of the waitress could not get it right. The dining-room soon grew aware of his contempt for American coffee, American waitresses, and, inferentially, for America in general. When at last he mounted his horse to ride the trail in search of a fitting subject for his illustrious brush, such a scowl sat upon his Olympian brow that Briggs would have rejoiced at a perfect model for one of his cartoons, "And so the day was utterly ruined."

Not long after we had thrown our last diamond hitch, and not having expected too much of coffee fifty-five miles from a railroad and a cow, jogged our pack train into a trot across the echoing bridge over McDermott Falls, and then headed up the Swiftcurrent Trail, gay with the wine of the mountain air.

Continental Divide in Background, Seen across Lake McDermot

We were provisioned for several days, and our possible objective was Mount Cleveland, many miles to the north, and the highest summit in Glacier Park. However, we did not greatly care whether we reached Mount Cleveland or not, the ascent not being difficult enough to make it attractive above any other adventures that might happen by the way. The preceding winter had been unusually severe, and the snow still lay in great drifts on the summits and flanks of the Divide, even blocking some of the passes. Granite Chalet, just over the summit of Swiftcurrent Pass, had not yet been opened for tourist accommodation, and beyond that point the trail was entirely problematical. No ranger had been through it that season, and after a winter of heavy snow a trail through virgin forest can be a difficult affair. So much the better! Three double-bitted axes were handy on our packs, and our time was our own.

When you speak of a pass, you ordinarily vision a deep gap between two mountains. But that is not what you will find a pass to be in the Rockies. The main chain of the Rocky Mountains of Montana is what the geologists call a "fault." In times so remote that only H. G. Wells is quite sure about them, the earth crust cracked, buckled, and one edge of the crack slid eastward a dozen miles over

the other, thus exposing a solid wall, running north and south, many thousands of feet high, with its greatest elevation at the point where the upper crust lay over the edge of the under. Glacial action and erosion have now carved valleys and gorges and cañons leading into this wall, and hewn its summit into fantastic peaks and battlements, doubtless greatly lowering its original altitude. But the wall itself still stands, strata after strata of the earth's crust exposed in multi-colored nakedness of rock and shale. It is only a spine in places now, but it is always at least that,—the spine of a continent, the Great Divide. Every erosion valley that leads up to this towering wall, a valley threaded by a rushing green stream and often strung with little green lakes, ends smash at the base of the precipices, apparently in a cul-de-sac.

Yet in reality it is not an impasse, but the pass itself. Once having reached the head wall of the valley, all that remains is to climb that wall and go over the Divide at the point two or three thousand feet above you, between two higher peaks. The head wall of the Swiftcurrent valley, at the apex of the amphitheatre, looks unscalable, as indeed it is. It is a naked precipice down which come sliding silvery white ribbons of water from the glacier that hangs on an upper ledge. But just to the right, on

the side wall, the slope is more propitious, and here the trail has been cut, making the ascent by a series of zigzags, or switchbacks, shorter or longer according to the angle of inclination. On the steepest parts of the wall they are so short that the leader of the pack train can look down on the heads of those in the rear. It is a government trail, however, never exceeding a twelve per cent. grade and comfortably wide.

We were still a little saddle-shy, we easterners, as our horses tugged up this trail, and, besides, our look-off was back down the Swiftcurrent valley, over the little green lakes, between the red ramparts of the guarding walls, to the far blue plains of Alberta, lying level like the sea. What awaited us at the summit we could not tell. Nor were we sufficiently impressed when we did near the summit, the trail leading out upon a snow-field, now melted soft like sticky rock salt, and into a thin vapor that swept around us with cool, wraith-like fingers. A touch of cloud but added zest to the climb. So we unpacked our lunch, our cameras, and sketching boxes, in the little grassy meadow on the col of the Divide which is Swiftcurrent Pass, and where the greenish-gray ground squirrels were scampering by the score, disappearing down their innumerable holes in apparently mortal terror, only to poke an

inquiring head out an instant later to survey us with alert black eyes. We proposed to remain here a while, cloud or no cloud, and investigate the small peak just to the south, a peak composed largely of broken fragments of rock piled in a careless pyramid.

As we sat at lunch the ground squirrels became more and more friendly. They drew near, they sat upon their haunches, pressed their forepaws against their little stomachs, and emitted squeaks, after the manner of a doll which enunciates "Papa" when squeezed amidships. Presently, hearing a rustle at my side, I turned to see a portion of bread and cheese which I had laid on the grass, disappearing rapidly down a hole. Before we had finished our luncheon, one little fellow had been persuaded to climb up on our knees, and even to sit on our hands to secure a coveted morsel of food.

But here, above the timber, on the almost naked spine of the Divide, the ground squirrels were not our only companions. As we left them nosing around for fallen crumbs, and started up over the rocks, I was suddenly aware of a large bird which ran scurrying away, almost from under my feet, with a warning note not unlike that of a partridge hen. Amid the gray and brown stones, and under the driving scuds of mist, this bird was curiously

protected by the color and texture of her feathers, and after she had gone fifty feet I could hardly have told what became of her, even if I had watched more carefully. As a matter of fact, however, I was more intent on what was taking place near the spot where she had first appeared. What looked like seven little stones—I think there were seven, though I could not be sure—were scurrying away in among the larger rocks, and in less time than it takes to tell it, every one had vanished completely from sight. I went on, not wishing to terrify the mother ptarmigan too greatly, and wishing, also, to watch her, from a distance, as she reassembled her brood. But this sight was denied me. Either she did not come back till we were out of sight, or the visibility was so low in the mist that her protective coloration quite hid her. The latter might easily have been the case, I should say, if she had chosen to return. Living up on the heights, without the shelter of trees and almost without the shelter of shrubs, the ptarmigan would be a fair mark for any hawk or eagle unless it were for this protective coloration, this extraordinary resemblance between feathers and stone.

We had not climbed far up the rock-piled peak before another example of protective coloration became visible, when a small stone resting on top of a

large flat one suddenly came to life and slipped over the farther edge. I ran around the boulder after it, and it ran away from me in the opposite direction, like a boy playing tag around a tree. So I stepped back a few paces and waited, with camera ready, till it poked its head around the corner to see if I had gone. My developed film showed an excellent portrait of a boulder, but few people can find upon it the head and shoulders of Mr. Whistling Marmot (western cousin to our woodchuck) until his features are carefully pointed out to them. The white and the dark patches on his muzzle, chest, and back are so neutral against the rocks that he is a difficult fellow to photograph in his native environment.

This chap, too, was curiously indifferent to us. To be sure, he got off the rock at our approach, but he didn't even make an attempt to reach any safe shelter. An eastern woodchuck, born two hundred feet from a dwelling and feeding all his life in the hayfield, would have been far more wary. All he wanted was to be left alone on that flat boulder. As soon as he was photographed, and we had moved on up the slope, he got back to his original perch, and lay once more in what hazy sunlight there was, as inert as a stone. Fifty feet above him I paused and tossed back a pebble, which hit close to his side. He

raised his head a little, and shook it, as if to say, "For goodness' sake, can't you leave me alone?" Then he went to sleep again. Apparently little in this mountain world of his had ever dangerously annoyed him, and fear was not one of his guiding instincts. I have seen ruffed grouse in the White Mountains show an equal indifference to man, but I never saw it displayed by an eastern woodchuck, even one which had passed all its life in the deep forests.

A swing to the left, while climbing our peak, brought us to the rim of a considerable precipice, looking down upon Swiftcurrent Glacier, snow-covered now and showing no ice, and upon the amphitheatre at the head of the valley. One of the rewards of climbing in the Rockies is the profusion of precipices that wait to plunge suddenly away beneath your feet. From the valleys and cañons below they are glorious with color in sunlight, and towering, topless and grim when the clouds are over them; but no precipice from below is so thrilling as it is from the rim. Perhaps it is a boyhood instinct persisting in us which lures us to their brink. The small boy climbs a tree, or scales to the ridge-pole of the barn, and, looking down, experiences a primal thrill. It is hard to say, indeed, whether the difficulty of the ascent or the promise of that thrill is

the more potent impulse to set him climbing. And there is much of the boy in every mountaineer, or he would not remain a mountaineer.

When we reached the top of our peak, we looked down upon the sharp spine of the Divide, stretching southward till it rose to the snow-covered ramparts of Mount Gould. On the left, or east side, it plunged down a little way to Swiftcurrent Glacier; on the Pacific side it dropped at first precipitously, and then, by a more gradual wooded slope, into the deep hole of Mineral Creek Cañon. The top of the spine could hardly have been fifty feet wide for a stretch of two or three miles, and down the centre of it ran a path,—a path as plain, almost, as that the farmer makes between the kitchen door and the well, save that it was trodden in shale stone instead of sod. Yet few must be the human feet that have ever walked it. Across this sky-flung bridge between two peaks of the Great Divide pass and repass the people of the upland wilderness, chiefly the sheep and goats, no doubt, seeking new pasturage, but a fox, perhaps, sometimes, and sometimes a mountain lion, a grizzly, or a deer. For ages they have been using this bridge, till their game trail shows plainly even in a photograph—a bridge so splendid, so upborne above the valley world, that the gods should tread it to Valhalla, while from the

peaks, in thunder, rolled the celestial orchestration.

But the trail was fast vanishing now in racing scud. The wind had been rising till it blew a gale, and it was bitterly cold. The white, Alpine summit of Heaven's Peak across the cañon to the west went out of sight in a billowing cloud mass. Even as we turned to descend, the stinging flakes of an unseasonable snowstorm were upon us, driven by the wind till they seemed fairly to cut. Yet they soaked us, too, as they clung and melted on our clothes. It took some little time to get down the rocks, made suddenly slippery, gather the horses together, and repack. There was no thought now of pushing down into the forest and camping. Our one desire was to get to the shelter of Granite Chalet, a few hundred feet below the summit of the pass.

Presently the building loomed up through the scudding white dimness that enveloped and soaked us, and without the slightest compunction we climbed over the debris of the rear porch, wrecked that previous winter by the snow, and broke in the kitchen door. It was chill and damp inside, but there was a range in the kitchen, and a big chunk stove in the office and living-room beyond, and in the wreck of the rear porch we had immediate fuel.

While the guides unpacked the horses, and brought in the dunnage and provisions, we set those two stoves to roaring, and then hustled out with axes for more substantial fuel, timber line being at about this point. Once inside, too, the keys of the chalet were offered to us for the taking—they hung on a ring under the manager's desk. Blankets and bedding were piled neatly on the floor. Each could pick up his bed and walk up-stairs to his individual bedroom. With the wind howling and wailing outside, and every now and again buffeting the little building as if in rage at its audacity in perching itself up there on the mountain and determined to knock it loose, with the sleety snow lashing the window-panes and the thermometer falling rapidly, the chalet seemed an exceeding sweet place of refuge. Soon around the chunk stove arose the pungent, sharp odor of wet woolen garments drying, and overhead the floor creaked as we made up the beds for the night. Dad was busy in the kitchen. We had three lanterns of our own, and found candles. In the gathering darkness Dad served us with "afternoon tea," boiling hot in tin dippers, and went back to attend to his cooking. On the desk we found copies of last summer's magazines and even a newspaper or two, and read items aloud to show how unimportant the news is, any-

way. This pastime suggested to somebody the ancient conundrum, "Why is the *Boston Transcript* like a porous plaster?—Because it is good for a week back." Boston! How far away it seemed as the cabin shook and the gale howled. Darkness had come, and the smell of coffee and bacon and potatoes from the kitchen, and the voice of Dad crying, "Come and get it!" when suddenly we heard a stamping on the front veranda, and a great shaking and rattling of the door.

We shot the bolt, and admitted a gust of snow and wind which sent all loose papers flying, and behind it four drenched and cold and snow-crusted men, staggering under heavy packs and looking as thankful for our presence as they were amazed at it. They had hiked up twenty miles or more that day from Lake Macdonald, expecting, like us, to camp, for they knew the chalet wasn't open. When they ran into the storm, they decided, like us, to push on to the shelter of a building, though it meant climbing into the gale and through the snow. But they had almost abandoned hope of reaching Granite Park, bewildered by the early dusk and the storm, and exhausted by cold and wind, when they caught the gleam of our lights. All four were young men, from what Montana calls the East—which is to say, Chicago. Youth,

or hardihood, or preferably both, are required of any one who would go on foot, especially without a guide, over the high trails.

Their wet garments were soon added to ours around the stove, and our increased family sat down to supper in the tumultuous democracy of the storm.

But we were to have another guest. He came by the back door. We heard Dad deliver himself in the kitchen of one of his characteristic but unprintable expressions, reserved for the rare occasions when he was surprised. Then he came in to us and invited us to come and view his "exhibition". We went.

Standing by the stove was a comic-supplement hobo. I have never, before nor since, seen anything so perfect in the hobo line. A small, dirty cap was perched upon his head. His face was covered with a week's stubble of beard. His ragged, patched coat, with dangling sleeves, was caught by a piece of rope around the waist, and from this rope, on one side, swung a tomato can, blackened by the smoke of fires. Below his fringed trousers protruded a pair of tattered shoes, now soaked almost to a pulp. He held his chilled, red hands toward the stove, not deigning us a glance, the picture of physical misery, yet so utterly a replica of those

impossible cartoons that we almost gave way to our mirth.

And what was he doing here, on the top of the Continental Divide, miles—hard, difficult miles—from any railroad, any highroad, any human habitation? We asked him, but he made no reply. Left alone later with Dad, warmed by food—our food—and the fire, he said that he was looking for work. That was the only explanation he ever gave, but it branded him as a cosmic humorist, and so tickled Dad that he made him up a bed on the floor by the kitchen stove—and locked the provisions in the pantry.

That night around the fire we sat in a ring and held high converse, friends and strangers, while now and again somebody slipped out into the darkness to observe the diminishing storm, and to report, at last, the presence of a star. There is a common bond between mountaineers, as there is between golfers, motorists with their first car, and actors. The leader of the four trampers, I soon discovered, knew the White Mountains. More than that, he was familiar with Starr King's book. Did he know the Kinsman trail, and the view over Lonesome Lake and across the Notch to Lafayette? Had I ever been over the Twins and down the East Branch country? Was it true that the lumbermen

had spoiled the Beaver Brook Trail up Moosilauke? And then we laughed at our eager memories of the little White Hills, here on the spine of the continent, under the bridge to Valhalla, where the Presidential Range itself would be a footstool. Ah, but he too was of Yankee heritage! The true Yankee, I am sure, would stand below Mount Everest, thrilled by its majesty, awed by its tremendousness—and think of Mount Washington.

Stars were gleaming through rifts in the racing sky when we went to bed, but the night riders of the wind were still tearing by, vast, invisible horsemen who lurched against our shelter till it rocked and shook with their buffeting. But in the morning summer was back again on the range, and in the powder of snow, already beginning to melt, we saw the tracks of our comic hobo, pointing eastward up the pass. Dad was examining the equipment, but nothing had vanished. I think he was rather disappointed. The air was clear as only Rocky Mountain air can be. Across the dark, heavily timbered gorge of Mineral Creek, far below us, rose the white pyramid of Heaven's Peak, sparkling and serene. Southwestward we could see far down the cañon to the opening where Lake Macdonald lay, and beyond that the distant blue foothills. Northwestward, ten miles across the

gorge, the white-capped range stretched toward Canada. Just over our heads, behind, was the battlemented Divide. All this we saw clearly for the first time, since we had arrived in a cloud. It seemed rather a pity to leave it, and plunge down into the forest. But we put the interior of the chalet carefully to rights, thanked it for its hospitality, and plunged.

We were on a trail which, whatever its condition may be to-day, was then quite unsuited to ordinary tourist travel. It was nothing but a rough ranger's trail at best—and we found it at its worst, after a severe winter and before any one else had ridden it. Moreover, for the first thousand feet it was excessively slippery from the snow, and the pack horses had to be watched with great care. As soon as we got down into larger timber the snow ceased entirely, but our troubles didn't. It was a magnificent forest we entered, not such a forest, to be sure, as those stands of Douglas fir in the Cascades, but rather more like virgin timber among our northeastern mountains. The trees were tall, straight, and relatively slender, like masts, seldom over thirty inches in diameter, and much more frequently not that, but shooting seventy-five or eighty feet without a limb. The growth, however, was more diversified than in our eastern forests.

There were almost as many larches as pines, and hosts of spruce and balsam, never in pure stands but well mixed. Many of the trees, of course, were down, across the trail, and seldom enough had one fallen without taking others with it, in a crossed confusion of log barricade. Sometimes we could ride around these barriers, through the underbrush. Sometimes we could jump the log. Sometimes neither course was possible, and we either had to dismount and lead saddle horses and pack train around, searching out a way while the pack animals balked and tugged and tried to break, or else unsling the axes and go at the obstruction. We left enough four-foot lengths of log on that trail, cut out of fallen timber, to have made a respectable wood-pile.

Once down by Mineral Creek, at the bottom of the cañon, we hoped the old trail north, past Waterman Lake into Canada, would be in better shape, but for some distance it was even worse. In places it was quite washed away, and we had to take to the stream bed. We were going up again now, and we kept going up steadily, for fifteen miles, glimpsing now and then through the trees the wall of the Divide to our right, the western, parallel range to our left. The sun was getting low, the shadows were creeping over us, as we broke at last out of

heavy woods into those sparser and lower scattered stands which denote the approach of timber line. We were ascending steeply now, the trail heading for a level ridge which blocked the end of the valley, and carried the Divide across from the eastern to the western range. Naturally, this elevation was called Flat Top. No one has yet been able to count the number of Flat Tops in the western United States.

As we neared the summit we came out into one of those upland parks so characteristic of the Rockies, a high meadow lush with grass, studded with little groves of evergreens, threaded with ice-water rills, and walled by great naked precipices of broken, many-colored rock. Across this meadow here and there lay drifts of snow, and close beside them beds of golden dog-tooth violets. On the upper ledges were caps and cornices of snow. In the air was the tinkle of tiny waterfalls and the whisper of water in the grass. In the air, too, was the pungent smell of balsam, for all the trees here were pointed firs. Looking back down the cañon, we saw the promise of a superb prospect. I say the promise, because at the moment we were hanging to the horns of our saddles to keep on our horses, so dog weary that our esthetic senses were, to put it mildly, blunted.

"Who votes to camp here?" called back the leader.

The only dissenting vote was a neigh from a tired pack horse—and he didn't know what he was doing.

We fell stiffly from our saddles, and began to unload and unharness. The horses were turned out on an upper level of the meadows, and we went about the various tasks of making camp, stringing the tents between convenient balsams, setting up our collapsible stove, laying a camp fire, gathering balsam boughs for beds (with, I hasten to add, the special permission of the ranger), and pegging down the poles on the tent floors to hold these boughs in place. A bough bed, if it is not properly laid and secured, can be more uncomfortable before morning than the naked ground. We had no trouble in securing water, for our camp was pitched between two little brooks, not fifty feet apart, which came tinkling down over the grass and the stones from the melting snow on the Divide.

Our tents were shipshape, our personal dunnage-bags convenient to our bunks, a camp fire was snapping, a wood-pile stacked beside it, and we had washed in the brook, when the voice of Dad cried, "Come and get it!"—and we came.

There was no table. We sat on the grass, on

Ascending Continental Divide near Flattop, Northern Glacier Park

logs, on anything convenient, in a semicircle before Dad's stove, and ate and drank like famished things. And as we ate, the esthetic sense came back to us (wasn't it William James who said that a cup of coffee at the right moment could alter a man's philosophy of life?), and we were aware that far back down the cañon we had ascended the twilight had settled in sombre, mysterious shadow, while above it the snow-streaked summits were towers and battlements of amethyst, under billowing canopies of salmon-pink cumuli. Let the angels have their celestial architecture of jasper and gold, said we; for us, the amethyst battlements of the Great Divide.

Then the warm colors faded, the last blush went off the upper snow-fields, fold upon fold the mountains marched in solemn twilight blue, and lo! above the western summits hung a star!

It was quiet in camp that evening. The horses had moved up on Flat Top till only the faintest tinkle of their bells came down with the whispered rush of water falling far away, a sound like the ghost of thunder or a steady summer wind. The weary guides were already asleep in their tent. Dad had washed the last dish (none too carefully, I fear), and joined them. Save only our party, there were no human beings for many mountain

miles. The hermit thrushes had long since ceased their songs. The snap of the camp fire had given place to the almost inaudible sibilant mutter of hot coals in a bed. Far above us the silence was broken by the crackling roar of a little avalanche; some rock had broken loose from a precipice, and crashed down to the shale heap below. Silence again, and the whisper of the ice-water rills beside the camp exaggeratedly loud by contrast. Then a rustle and murmur of night wind in the balsams, with a whiff of their fragrance. And a sleepy "Good-night."

. . . . . .

The bright morning light showed a peak of the Divide towering directly over our camp, flanked by the sharp, castellated ridge. What lay on the other side? We did not know. So far as we were concerned, this was unexplored country. Certainly there was no trail and no photographic record that we had ever seen. Besides, from that summit we could undoubtedly glimpse Mount Cleveland to the north, and determine whether it was climbable after the snow. So we got out the Alpine rope, more for the aid of the women than from any actual need of it,—or so we estimated from the base,—packed lunches and cameras, and set blithely out.

After a first ascent over the long shale slope, we reached the bottom of an extensive snowdrift, that took us rapidly up to the base of a precipice. A traverse, leading upward along this precipice, where the rope was a comfort as a rail for those less used to climbing, brought us to a final scramble up to the spine of the Divide, just north of our objective peak. The Divide here was about eight thousand feet, and hardly wider than a country road—a knife-blade of jagged rock. On the eastern side, its snowdrifts reaching almost to our feet with an upward sweep like surf dashing on a rocky shore, lay Chaney Glacier, now a smooth though tilted expanse of dazzling white. Its outer edge broke abruptly against space. Far out beyond the top of this precipice rim the world came into sight again—the dark, timbered valley of the Belly River, threaded by the translucent green ribbon of Glenns Lakes, leading out to the blue ocean of the Canadian prairie, and flanked by leaping and lonely mountains. Across the invisible cañon below the upper end of Chaney Glacier we could see the more than ten thousand feet of Mount Cleveland, its upper slopes and ledges now a solid, gleaming white. The storm had made climbing it highly impractical for several days, and we were not provisioned for the wait; so then and there we

abandoned the attempt. Not, however, having set that climb as our one and only objective, but seeking, rather, to find whatever of charm or adventure might befall, we put our disappointment lightly away, roped ourselves in orthodox fashion, and went out on the soft snow of the glacier, the boy of the party, at least (and I will not say none other of us), hoping that perhaps a crevasse would open under our tread, and the strength of the rope be tested. Alas! there were no crevasses. They were still packed solid with snow. No bridges caved beneath our tread. Perhaps there are no crevasses on Chaney Glacier at any time, though I hope for the sake of its reputation that there are. But there were none now. We achieved nothing more exciting than wet boots. Then four of us turned to the peak above, and made the few hundred feet of toilsome ascent over broken shale held just at the angle of repose, where a single step too roughly taken can start a baby landslide.

We were four grown men, and men supposedly of something more than inarticulate response to beauty, to majesty, to the appeals of nature. One of us was a painter, one a photographer, one a man who ranges the hills and forests because in no other life could he be happy, and one by profession calls himself a journalist, and juggles with words.

As we four scrambled up the last pitch and came out on the wind-swept summit, scarcely big enough to hold us all, scarcely larger than the top of a table, I regret to have to confess, in the interests of strict accuracy, that we were not even like the wonder-struck explorer who stood "silent upon a peak in Darien," dumb with a saving sense of our incapacity for expression. We swore. Variously and severally, we swore, vulgar, commonplace, meaningless oaths. Then, by one common impulse, we lay flat on our stomachs—in part from an instinct of self-preservation on that aerial and wind-swept table-top—and deliberately spit! Yes, the mountaineer remains a small boy.

We had come out, with no warning whatever, on the brink of a tremendous precipice. It fell away beneath us for three thousand feet, into a cañon where a lake reposed and fed a source arm of the Belly River. Directly across this cañon, sweeping up first with a long debris pile of shale, and then rising more and more precipitously in strata after strata of serrated gray rock till the jagged ridge of the long summit cut the sky, nine thousand nine hundred and forty-four feet at the highest point, boomed the rampart of Mount Merritt. To take over words of sound to describe sight is a proceeding I should ordinarily condemn, but in this case

there is no escape. This great wall of Mount Merritt as surely boomed at us as Kipling's dawn came up like thunder out o' China 'cross the bay. We were four little pygmies, huddled on a spire of rock, every sense of us smitten with tremendousness. As soon as our first instinctive boyish reaction had passed, we laughed a little sheepishly, and sat up to assume the air of lords over our new-found creation. In front of us—just one short step in front of us!—was a cañon. Behind us was another cañon. To right and left were hanging glaciers. Green lakes lay far below, turning to lilac as a cloud trailed a shadow-anchor across their shallows. Up-ended earth crust, tortured precipices, surrounded us, and into the blue distance marched an army of snow-capped peaks, northward to the Arctic ice, southward to the Isthmus.

Yet there are people who wonder why any one goes to the exertion of climbing a mountain.

Presently we began the descent, and I learned anew the marvelous capacity of the Rocky Mountains for contrasts. They can achieve a Miltonic epic and a tiny lyric by Father Tabb (does any one read Father Tabb any more?) in the same breath. They can smite you to awe with a precipice, and a moment later have you on your knees in admiration

before a perfect little garden of jewel-like beauty, no larger than a platter. As we slid and skidded down the steep shale slope on the south side of our peak, a spot, you would say, about as hopeless botanically as the earth could well offer, we were suddenly in the midst of a colony of such gardens. Unfortunately, we could not photograph them then, because of the high wind. But why not wait a day, and come back to them, armed, if necessary, with blankets or ponchos for windbreaks? That, in fact, is just what we did, and by so doing we made our base camp the more cherished in memory, too. To be always on your way over the high trails—or the low—is a great mistake. It is to bring into the leisure of the wilderness the rush of our urban life. When you find yourself in an attractive camp, with something interesting to do, or to look at, stay there till its full possibilities are exhausted. You will be amazed, perhaps, at how soon your tent, your camp fire, the spot in the brook where you wash, the dim trail you make to the stream for water, become home for you, with all the pleasant associations of an accustomed dwelling. Especially at night do you return to it, with wet feet and tired body, as to the familiar shelter and comfort.

We rose early the next morning, before the sun

was up, shivering in the chill air, and got an early start, ahead of the wind, back up the mountain. But early as we were, the wind was there first, awaiting us above timber—not, however, a gale as on the day before. With much effort and strategy we arranged for certain chosen gardens to sit quietly for their photographs, in the first rays of the sun that had risen now above the blue plains of Alberta and was peering down at us over the crest of the Divide.

The basis of all these tiny gardens, hung eight thousand feet aloft on the southern face of a shale pyramid, was the same—a clump of moss campion. Sometimes the clump was two feet across, sometimes much smaller; sometimes it was on top of a rock, like a patch of polypodys in our eastern woods, sometimes (and more often) cuddled down at the base of a rock for shelter. So brief is the season of flowers on these sub-Arctic heights—three months at most is spring, summer, and autumn—that most plants you find are in bud or bloom. The moss campion was always in bloom, its charming little pink flowers studding the rounded, soft pad of the mossy foliage like pins in a green cushion. By itself, a clump of this plant is delightful, as rock gardeners know. But the rare charm of these gardens resulted from the fact that

Alpine Garden at 8000 Feet, Glacier Park — Moss Campion, Forget-me-not, Grasses, etc.

the sturdy campion, once established, built up with its own humus, and with the powdered dust it caught from the air, a fertile and hospitable spot for other seeds to lodge in; and the green pincushions were not only studded with the pinks, but with the cerulean blue of forget-me-nots (the true forget-me-not in these mountains seems to favor the higher altitudes, leaving the valleys to the taller, false variety), with pale mauve Alpine vetch, and sometimes, for full measure, with a stalk or two of green lily (*zygademus elegans*), small, roundish, cream-white flowers, splashed with green, and many of them on a stem, or with a shooting star (*dodocatheon pauciflorum*), a strange, vivid little red flower shooting down its pointed yellow nose toward the earth, and most resembling in shape the blossom of our eastern deadly nightshade. None of these flowers, at this altitude, grew more than six or eight inches high; none of them was large or showy, but small, delicate, and vivid. Imagine them, drawn close together in the niche of friendly shelter made by some fragment of rock, compact in the little patch of soil built up by the moss-campion plant, blooming bravely and beautifully far up above the timber, around them the naked shale or the snowdrifts, just over them the ragged battlements of the Great Divide, far below

them the wooded cañon and then the blue and white ramparts of mountains on the march! There is nothing, I think, quite like their charm.

The passion for rock gardening is sometimes difficult to understand, especially in view of the rock gardens men make for themselves, those piled-up heaps of stone which have the careless, impromptu air of the after-dinner speaker who has been fidgeting in his chair for an hour, "not expecting to be called on." But the passion is quite comprehensible after you have seen a real rock garden, such a garden as grows on the upper battlements of the Continental Divide. It is not so easy to understand the average attempt at a rockery, in which there is always far too little rock and far too many—and generally too large—plants. Restraint, delicacy, surprise, characterize nature's rock planting, just a drift of bloom here and there, lodged in a cranny. Then, too, as we discovered on our shale peak, the rocks themselves, in their natural station, are tinged with storm-resisting lichens, and in tiny soil pockets everywhere minute stone crops grow, giving the sensation of a mere breath of verdure exhaled over the entire area, so faint it is scarcely discernible at a glance, but which is still felt as an essential of the charm. It is this, perhaps, which is most difficult to capture in an

artificial rockery, even if you have succeeded in propagating the Alpine plants.

But for the present we will leave the rock gardens on their lonely slopes above the cañon, pass over the afternoon which followed our climb, an afternoon spent in lazy idling around the camp, and rise ahead of the sun the following morning. While the rest were breaking camp, two of us went up to the higher pasture on Flat Top, to round up the horses, which had been out to grass for two days now, and were well rested and rotund. One of them was missing. We picked up his tracks in the trail leading north, over the ridge, and hastily drove the others down to camp, saddled two of them, and rode back after the wanderer.

The summit of Flat Top is just what its name implies. Now it was peppered with snowdriftts amid the little stands of stunted evergreens, and between the drifts grew grass of a brilliant emerald and hosts of golden dog-tooth violets. As we hurried along the trail, wondering if we would have to ride to Canada for our beast, or at any rate to the ranger station at Waterman Lake, suddenly our own horses began to snort with alarm, and then to rear on their hind legs, making frantic efforts to turn around and flee. Being but a green horseman at best, my faculties were almost entirely con-

centrated on the task of keeping in the saddle and preventing my cayuse from bolting back down the trail. But at a shout from my more skilled companion, who was greatly enjoying himself, I managed to look ahead. There, across an open space not two hundred feet away, went a huge, lumbering grizzly, lumbering in aspect, but actually traveling at an astonishing speed. He was out of sight in a stand of pines before I had fairly glimpsed him.

"He was probably stalking our lost horse," said my companion. "You wait here."

He spurred past me with that quick, level stride a western rider knows how to get out of a horse, and three minutes later returned, driving the wanderer ahead of him.

"Grazing a hundred yards up the trail," he said. "Mr. Silvertip was so curious about him, he didn't hear us coming."

My own nag was still twitching and trembling from the encounter, and turned back with alacrity. But I found it hard to forgive him for keeping me so busy that I couldn't watch the bear run, with the attention he deserved. It isn't every day that you can watch a grizzly, in the full open, making a dash for cover.

All that morning, after we had broken camp and

packed our train, bidding good-bye reluctantly to our two-day home in the balsams, we toiled down the cañon trail, with the sun getting hazier and hazier, and at last the clouds drifting in over the cliffs of the Divide. Before we reached the base of the trail up to Granite Chalet, it had begun to rain. We ate a hasty luncheon in the partial shelter of the forest, and, donning our slickers, began the climb. The rain increased steadily in volume as we ascended into the under fringes of the cloud, and the trail grew wetter and more slippery. In some places where the way was steep we had to dismount, and with comprehensible misgivings follow the instructions of the guide, to grab our horses by the tails and get what aid we could that way. But the poor horses seemed accustomed to this indignity, and failed to resent it. One could only be thankful they were not mules!

This trail, which was not at that time a tourist thoroughfare but only a ranger's short cut, was so narrow that the dripping shrubs on either side whipped against us; it ran water now like a baby brook, and presently, as the cloud condensed around us and the cold increased, it grew slippery as glass with sleet. A sudden cry from a guide, a startled scream from the horse, and one of the pack animals went off and rolled over and over three times be-

fore he came to rest in a mass of huckleberry bushes thirty feet down the slope. His pack had burst open, and canned goods strewed the hillside. There was a delay in the chill dampness, while we got him back, and repacked. Then we resumed our march, numbed with cold, traveling now in a cloud of snow.

At last we broke into the open spaces below the chalet, heralding timber line, splashed through a brook, and raised our eyes to see the low sun suddenly breaking through the clouds over Heaven's Peak across the cañon. A moment later, even as we toiled up the last few feet to shelter, this great sun shaft, like the penciled rays from a vast searchlight, struck full on the cloud curtain which enveloped the Divide, and a gigantic and perfect rainbow swam into life, arching high over the half-seen battlements, and dropping down on the southern end into the forest at the base of the Garden Wall. The effect was so extraordinarily theatric, especially as all the sunlight was pouring out of one hole in the west, and the snow was still swirling around us, that we were startled into forgetfulness of our miserable state, and remained outside the chalet till the colors faded and the hole in the western sky grew larger and made a rose-pink backdrop behind the Alpine cone of Heaven's Peak.

That night a porcupine ate up a halter which one of the guides carelessly left outside. I was awakened early in the morning by the sound of his execution. Close to the chalet I cornered another one, and by poking him with a rotten stick secured several quills. A deer circled the building, as we were packing up, wary and shy, but full of alert curiosity. His ears up, his big eyes fixed upon us, he remained for some time about two hundred and fifty yards away, finally bounding lightly up the rocks and disappearing around a headland. We took our time about packing, for the day's march was an easy one. The morning was clear and fine. Again we paused on the top of the pass, sketching and exploring and lying in the sun till after luncheon, and then we dropped rapidly down to the Swiftcurrent valley and jogged along on the homeward way till we reached the last level mile or two. Then the cowboy guide, who was leading our little cavalcade, emitted a whoop, and his horse took wings. With disconcerting suddenness every other saddle horse in the party did likewise, tearing past the pack horses and settling down to a wild gallop of pursuit. I was carrying my camera in a pack on my back, and it began to pound my spinal column with rhythmic and painful thumps. Hairpins flew from the women's heads. Eastern faces

grew set and desperate. But our cayuses had heard the call, and there was no stopping them. Past the ranger's house we tore, over the bridge we clattered, and brought up short in front of the hotel, again with disconcerting suddenness. Your western pony has no mercy on his brakes.

Presently the pack horses came sedately trotting in by themselves, and stood meek and dejected, waiting to be unloaded. They had, we declared, a civilized look. We were back to civilization, in very fact. Five minutes later we all caught each other at the news stand, buying the daily paper.

PIEGAN PINES AND GUNSIGHT PASS

HE next stage of our journey might have been made in a day—the trip over Piegan Pass from Many Glacier to Going-to-the-Sun chalets, a distance of something better than twenty miles. But twenty miles of a mountain pass trail is a long day's hike, and you miss much for sheer plodding weariness. The only proper method is to travel till some particularly alluring spot invites, and then camp, to savor it at sunset, in starlight, and under the shafts of the rising sun. We had progressed but six or eight miles the first morning, when we reached our camping Eden. The way took us at first through woods starred with the bright yellow bloom of the arnica, and along an open bank by a lake where the pentstemon was prolific and the yellow columbines, and I saw growing in profusion a plant which is extremely rare in the east, the spring-blooming blue or purple clematis. (Our eastern variety is listed as *clematis verticillaris,* and the western as *clematis columbiana,* but the difference is not easily apparent to the eye.) Both

grow along the ground, occasionally climbing a few feet up some convenient shrub, and both bear solitary blue-to-purplish flowers, composed of four pointed petals that hang down like a scalloped bell. I know of but two or three stations for this plant in my part of the world, the Berkshire Hills, and one of them, I rejoice to say, is on my own land, up the mountainside. It is, indeed, almost exclusively a mountain wild flower, I think, and one of our rarest. But here, in the Rockies, the vines were rioting over the ground and climbing up the bushes with the profusion of a bittersweet tangle. It was difficult for the guides to understand my reluctance to move on. But it is difficult for a western guide to understand any enthusiasm over wild flowers. Their own ignorance of the mountain flora is more abysmal than are the cañons.

We had moved on past the clematis, and reached a charming open meadow by the shore of a glacier-green lake. Directly across this lake shot up a precipice, threaded with white ribbons of falling water, and above it lay Grinnell Glacier. Behind and above the glacier, in turn, rose the last wall of the Divide. Just to the left of the lake the naked gray cliffs of Mount Gould reared upwards till they reached the slope of the mountain that tilts back to a long, sharp ridge-pole. This roof was white with

the snow we had run into the day before. To the right, the slopes of Grinnell Mountain, while steep enough, still were able to support a carpet of scrub timber and bushes. We were in a delicate, green amphitheatre, walled with precipices. There was plentiful pasture for the horses, pure water in abundance, superb prospects for the lift of the eye, an army of inquisitive ground squirrels waiting a word of encouragement to join our feast—and a garden of wild flowers such as I had not before encountered. It was not yet noon, but we made camp for the night!

It was a glorious afternoon we spent, scrambling up the side wall, through stubborn and tearing scrub, to photograph the glacier that hung on a ledge far above the lake, and then, when the breeze had died down with the dropping of the sun, trying to photograph the chalice cups that starred the grass of Grinnell Meadows, all about our camp. The chalice cup, or mountain anemone (*anemone occidentalis*), is perhaps the loveliest of all the Rocky Mountain wild flowers. At any rate, I thought so that day, when it blossomed so profusely around me, and had the field almost to itself. It sends up a flower stalk eight or ten inches from a cluster of very light, fuzzy leaves, the blossom itself being two or even three inches across, cream-

white in color, with a prominent golden-green centre. After the flower has dropped, the stem pushes on, for another foot, and develops finally a fluffy seed ball, not unlike a huge dandelion, which itself is extremely decorative, nodding in masses over the grass. Here in the meadows we found the plants budded, in full perfection of bloom, and in their final state. No doubt the melting of the snow had much to do with this, the budded plants growing in a place where a drift had but recently disappeared. Later we were to come upon sharp, V-shaped ravines where, on the sides, the flowers grew in belts, only a few feet wide, each belt representing a two- or three-week period under normal conditions, so that the flowers in the belt nearest to the bottom, where the snow had but just disappeared, were the dog-tooth violets of May, while on the upper rim, in full bloom on the same day, was the goldenrod of August! When the snow melts late, it is astonishing how quickly the repressed plants spring up, grow, and come into flower. In the Cascades of Oregon, on a warm July day, I have seen a snowdrift disappear from the reddish-gray pumice, leaving it damp and naked as a sea beach, and by the next evening I have seen this same desert pricked all over with green lance tips bursting through.

At any rate, we saw the chalice cups from bud to seed pod, acres upon acres of them, and for once I regretted our remoteness from the railroad, which prevented me from shipping any young plants home. On a bank in my garden I have several plants of the Alpine anemone (*anemone pulsatilla*), which is a strikingly similar flower, except that it is purple instead of white, and which sometimes is in full bloom above a powdering of belated April snow. If our eastern wild flower nurseries can propagate this foreign cousin, why cannot they propagate our own western anemone? It certainly grows on a variety of soils, for I have found it in profusion in the pure volcanic conglomerate above Crater Lake in Oregon, as well as in the lush meadows of the Rockies. For that matter, there are a host of western wild flowers, unknown in the East, that certainly deserve careful experiment. The tourist, however, seldom has any facilities for shipping out his specimen plants, and in my own case, could I have shipped them, there was nobody on the receiving end to give them proper care and set them in the most likely places. The work, of course, is one for the professional horticulturist, and it is strange that none seems whole-heartedly to have undertaken it.

So we reflected as we lay on our stomachs, focus-

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ing our cameras at chalice cups, like machine gunners in the grass, and catching in their solitary images on the ground glass still more of their queen-like beauty.

That evening our fire burned a hole of yellow radiance in the starlit darkness of the meadows, the shimmering lake lapped softly on its beach, the edge of the glacier and snow-covered roof of the overhanging mountain were ghost-white and gleaming against the blue-black night sky, and through the stillness came from far off the soft thunder of falling waters. Now and then a bell on one of the horses tinkled sweetly.

" I love that sound," said our cowboy guide, who was not given to poetic reflections.

We waited in some surprise, for the evident continuation of his remark.

" Yes," he added, " I love to wake up in the night and hear it. It means the old cayuse is still around, and I won't have to go chasing after him in the morning."

The old cayuses were all around at sun-up, and after an extremely tentative and abruptly terminated attempt to bathe in the glacier-fed lake, and the complete demolition of a mountain of griddle cakes and a log cabin full of syrup, we struck camp and were off.

The trail from Grinnell Meadows up to Piegan Pass follows an interesting conformation. Instead of climbing the Divide, it parallels it, climbing steadily from the very base of Mount Gould to a point, at last, almost ten thousand feet up, crosses an eastern spur thrown off from the Divide, and drops down to St. Mary Lake, still on the eastern watershed. The ascent is thus made under the very shadow of the Divide precipices, and it seems an endless climb in a naked wilderness of rock. Between the trail and the cliffs a stream comes down, leaping over Morning Eagle Falls, and a picture of those falls shows nothing at all but tumbling water and stratified stone, layer after layer piled up for three thousand feet. The backward view grows ever wilder and more impressive, especially the cliffs of Gould, which shoulder back exactly the way the new skyscrapers are erected in New York, each terrace capped with a little pinnacle like an ornamental urn. I doubt if this cliff could be climbed, not only because of its pitch but also the treacherous nature of the rock. However, if some Dolomite fan is looking for practice in his own country, I cheerfully call his attention to this portion of the Continental Divide.

There is scanty timber on the Piegan trail, and as the top of the pass is approached, you wind your

way over a desert of broken stone, with the Divide on your right and the ragged summit of Mount Siyeh on your left, a desolate, Dantean prospect, where lost souls might well be wandering. It was, indeed, almost as a ghost that I suddenly encountered a shrubby cinquefoil bush growing up here, more than eight thousand feet above the sea, above all timber, sheltered by a stone for six inches of its length, and then bent horizontal by the sheering gales, but bravely flowering. In fact, its yellow blossoms were larger and handsomer than those on the myriad bushes which have overrun my neglected sheep pasture in the Berkshires. I stopped beside this brave little bush, which refused to break, however much it bowed to the tempests, and saluted it as a friend from home. The guide, I think, suspected the altitude had gone to my head.

From the top of the pass we dropped two thousand feet or more down an interminable trail, cut on the traverse of a forty-five per cent. shale slide, a slide naked of all verdure, desolate as a Titanic slag heap. But at the bottom we hit a level stretch, with soil instead of stones beneath the horses' hoofs, and trotted into Paradise.

The spot in which we found ourselves was one of those glacial cirques so characteristic of the Rockies, but with a lovely and ingratiating personality all

Our Party Climbing through Desolation to Piegan Pass
The Cliff of Mt. Gould on the Left is Recommended to Dolomite Fans

its own. It bears the fitting name of Piegan Pines. Imagine a horseshoe amphitheatre, perhaps half a mile across and about as deep, with a comparatively level floor and walls two or three thousand feet high, precipitous in places, in places (as the head wall down which we had descended) steep slopes of naked shale. Imagine snow-fields hung far up on these precipices, and slender ribbons of waterfalls descending from them, so slender and silken, so softly falling, that they suggest the hair of Mélisande, grown white with peace. Imagine these waterfalls after they reach the valley floor, running across the lush emerald grass in little, clear, icy brooks. Imagine on the banks of these brooks and everywhere through the grass thousands upon thousands of dog-tooth violets, a foot tall, shaking their golden lily bells in the breeze. Imagine, too, a scattered host of limber pines, bursting with tiny pink cones like flowers—small, twisted, picturesque trees from a Japanese screen. Imagine all this, and then lift your eyes to the open end of the horseshoe, and see first the land plunge abruptly into a bottomless hole, and across the hole, the sudden, stunning leap of Mount Jackson, ten thousand feet into the air, all blue and dazzling white, and bearing on an eastward shoulder the great snow-field of Blackfeet Glacier, which it passes on to the infinite

procession of southward-marching summits. Imagine it if you can. But I fear you cannot, for the peculiar fusion of the most delicate beauties with the impact of tremendousness, so strikingly characteristic of the Rocky Mountains, is never quite grasped until it is actually experienced; and at Piegan Pines this fusion is at its perfection.

We built a noonday fire beside an ice-water rill, with dog-tooth violets for a centerpiece on our green table, and a storm-twisted limber pine for our roof, if we cared to draw back into the shade. It was such a withdrawal that disclosed to one of us a peculiar charm of the spot. By moving about among the pines it was possible to vary the landscapes almost infinitely, each new picture framed between two trunks, or under a twisted, pink-coned limb. You could get a picture of rolling grass, nodding violets and crystal water on the run—just the delicate, intimate foreground. Or you could get a picture of this delicate foreground at the feet of a naked precipice. Or you could glimpse just the top of a precipice through a piney hole. Or you could frame a great blue-and-white mountain, miles away, between two reddish-brown trunks. And each picture seemed more lovely than the last.

Why should any one, we said, leave such a spot? Except, we answered, in the hope of finding others

yet more alluring. Two of us, indeed, did not leave it till long after the others had departed down the trail. Their going left a profound silence, out of which gradually came many voices, mountain voices speaking to us—the far, soft thunder of waterfalls, a white-crowned sparrow close at hand, the sea-shell murmur of wind in the pines, the lush ripple of the brooks over the grass, the crack of a stick in our fire. As the sun sank down the west, the shadow of the western wall crept out across the amphitheatre, touched us with its chill as with a finger, and crept up the precipices to the east. In the distance Mount Jackson's snow-fields had already begun to blush with amethyst and its shadowed face to turn from cerulean blue to gun-metal, before we noticed that the hole into which we must descend was already filling up with twilight, as water fills a well. We doused our little fire with wistful regret, and put our horses down the trail. It was fortunate for us, perhaps, that there was but one trail, because in the heavy forests below darkness had come long before we reached the bottom, and saw the gleam of water from St. Mary Lake that told us camp could not be far off.

The northern twilights, however, are as long about waning into night as Tristan is about dying in the opera. Once we had reached the open path

beside the lake, we could see its cool, deep waters, and all the tall array of peaks that stand at guard around it, with old Red Eagle still bearing on his summit snows the blush of sunset. A noble and a lovely lake, St. Mary, and may the Virgin herself bless the French mission priest who, long ago, gave it so beautiful a name that no future trapper or surveyor quite was able to have it rechristened Lake McSweeny or Lake Bill Johnson. Neither have they who attempt to snatch immortality by affixing their miserable patronymics to a magnificent example of God's handiwork, been able to take the name from the noblest mountain which guards St. Mary Lake, Going-to-the-Sun, named they say by those true poets, the Indians, when their friend the missionary went westward, up the lake and over the pass. A great pink pyramid seen from the lake base on the east, with smooth, steep slopes, it is almost monumental in its perfection of line. It dominates the lake and the eastward-lying prairie, and it superbly sentinels the range behind. We camped that night by the lapping water at its feet.

To reach Gunsight Pass you climb a few easy miles from the head of St. Mary Lake to another one of those three walled amphitheatres hollowed into the Divide, which apparently block your way with a precipice. This one is cut into the north-

Shore Line of St. Mary Lake, One of the Loveliest Sheets of Water in America

east side of Mount Jackson, and is largely occupied by Gunsight Lake, but not quite. There is, at the lower end of the pond, a park of several hundred acres, and when we came into this park I pulled up my horse, and, without leaving the saddle, counted thirty varieties of wild flowers in bloom. The grass, indeed, was so thick with them that green was hardly the predominant color; a multi-colored and infinitely delicate carpet sweeping up to meet the multi-colored rocks above. One flower, however, predominated, the so-called Indian basket grass, or squaw grass (*xerophyllum tenax*), a member of the yucca family, growing here in such profusion that its white bloom-stalks, in long borders by the bits of wood, were like the white plumes of armies on the march, and the air was heavy with their sweet scent.

The flowers grow on a single thick stalk, from two to four feet tall, out of a clump of wiry, grass-like leaves. These blooms are cream white, and clustered thickly around the end of the stalk, a little after the manner of a red-hot poker plant. Sometimes the cluster is conical in shape, more often it is shaped like an inverted pear. It is stately, decorative, and striking, with a sweet and not too excessive odor. It is abundant, also, in parts of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon and Washington (always,

when I have found it there, growing on the west, or moist side of the Divide), and I am told it has been naturalized in the mountains of North Carolina. Whether any attempt has been made to grow it in our northeastern states, I cannot say. But I am sure the first person who does succeed in growing it will have many pilgrims to his field.

When we reached this park at the foot of Gunsight Lake, and looked up at the great, down-pitching snowdrifts on the side of Jackson, which we had got to traverse, horses and all, to reach the pass (normally the snow would have been melted at this season, which was late July), there seemed no good reason why we should go any farther that day, and at least three reasons why we shouldn't—the basket grass and two hermit thrushes. Dad speedily evolved a fourth. If we camped there, he'd have time to bake a pie. (It turned out to be a prune pie, but we forgave him in the course of time.) So there we camped, filling our cases with flowers, climbing up to Blackfeet Glacier in the vain hope of finding the snow melted enough to open the crevasses, and, as twilight stole on, watching the great purple shadows creep along the buttresses of Citadel and Going-to-the-Sun, which from this westward view was no longer a pyramid but a strange Aztec cathedral with a little turret on

Gunsight Peak from Gunsight Pass

top. The two hermits sang for us, even as they sing on my mountainside at home, and with their song was the less familiar one of the white-crowned sparrow. The night, however, settled down cold about us, with a chill breath as if from the glacier above. We huddled around our camp fire in the starlit dark, and crawled gladly in between all the blankets our packs could supply.

The trip over Gunsight Pass to Lake Macdonald is a leisurely day's pull, when the start is made from Gunsight Lake. You begin immediately to ascend, zigzagging up the steep and naked side of Mount Jackson. That morning, as we drew up level with the top of the head wall, we came at length to the huge snowdrift which cut across the trail. It was perhaps two hundred yards wide, and starting five hundred feet above us, swept down at an angle of forty-five degrees or better, straight and smooth as the white roof of a house, dropped five hundred feet below us—and ended in nothing! It ended, of course, at the top of a precipice, but it seemed to drop into the air. To a climber, with spiked shoes and an Alpine stock, traversing such a slope is simple enough. But when you are dressed for riding, and have to lead your horse, it is quite a different matter. A slip is the direct route to kingdom come. No one had been permitted over the pass

that season, because of this drift, but the rangers had gone up ahead of us that morning and shoveled a trail across, by notching into the snow and making a level path two feet wide. Across this we led our horses, some of them extremely loath to make the venture, too. A few hundred feet beyond we rounded a turn on the trail, and came into Gunsight Pass.

You are in it before you realize why it got its name. It is a notch on the Divide between the wall of Jackson and a sharp cone of rock which from the pass exactly resembles a gigantic gunsight, even in color. The pass itself is but a few rods wide, and hardly ten steps long, for the Divide here is only a razor back. Behind you the precipice falls abruptly away into the hole that holds Gunsight Lake, and in front of you, as you move westward, suddenly the new landscape bursts on your sight; you achieve, for once, the goal of dreams,—you see the land beyond the mountains, and find it wondrous fair.

Just over the spine is a tortured tree, which has struggled up as the last outpost of the timber, and held its own for centuries—or so it looks—against the vicious sniping of the storms. It is twisted to a spiral; its eastern side is branchless and scored almost clean of bark, the exposed wood being

Our Party Crossing the Great Drift on the Way to Gunsight Pass. Cleft of Pass can be Seen in the Centre of Picture

scoured to a polish by the wind-driven particles of rocky grit. Its few branches that hold out appealing arms toward the milder southwest are withered and scant. But it still lives, heroic and alone. And beneath it the trail drops down eight hundred feet to the bottom of a symmetrical glacial cirque, ground out of the red walls of Mount Jackson, and holding in its center an oval lake of the most marvelous green. Beyond that lake the land falls suddenly away again into a forest-filled cañon, and beyond that, far away, the haze-hung plains, and then, fold upon fold, the lower blue mountains huddle into the west. Lazy cumulous clouds were drifting high overhead as we paused to gaze on Lake Ellen Wilson—yes, that, alas! is its name—and when their shadows crossed the water they strangely turned the emerald green to opalescent lilac.

Even lunch beside a bush of magenta heather, and a chance to watch two Clark's crows,—splendid, noisy, humorous black-and-white birds,—teaching their young to manœuvre out over the brink of a precipice, and a half-mile border of twin flowers beside the trail, and finally the passage through the mid-afternoon mournful twilight of a ghostly cedar forest, were lesser pleasures of that day. My thoughts kept going back to that tree above the timber line, and to the jeweled lake beneath it. So,

that evening, pushing out from shore in a canoe on Lake Macdonald, with the northern twilight still bright over the water and the snow-clad peaks withdrawn and aloof, as if they were averting their faces to commune with the departed sun, I gave way to the mastering impulse of my tribe, and committed poetry. These are the poems I wrote, for it is an even more mastering impulse of my tribe to inflict on others the result of our rhapsodies:

TIMBER LINE

The tortured trees of timber line,
So small, so old,
So twisted by the wind,
So bent and racked and beaten to the ground,
Yet so alive and fighting to the end,
Are like those prophets of the world's advance,
Who face the storm-sleet
Of the scorn of men,
Grow old and hard
And bare with buffets on the breast,
To die at last
High on the uplands with their dream!

Lake Ellen Wilson from Gunsight Pass

LAKE ELLEN WILSON

An oval mile of emerald
Set in a cirque of vast, fantastic rocks;
Above, the snow-fields climbing to the sky,
Below, far off, the blue, mysterious plains;
A little wind has made the water crawl;
A little cloud, a white balloon
That trails its anchor down the slope,
Has swept that shadow out across the lake,
And, lo!
The emerald is an amethyst.

WILD STRAWBERRIES

T was a hot day. Our train for the east didn't arrive till after dinner that night, and the prospect of loafing for twelve hours in the Glacier Park Hotel was depressing. To be sure, we could spend a considerable portion of that time in answering the accumulated mail of the past month—but we had no intention of doing so. It had waited four weeks—let it wait another. Instead, we scared up some horses and jogged leisurely over the trail to Two Medicine Lake—over the road, rather, for the motors use it. A fascinating eight miles, the first five over the roll and swells of the prairie, the remainder past Lower Two Medicine, and up the gorge, a wide and smiling one, to the larger lake, which crinkles its green water and laps the beach at the very feet of Rising Wolf Mountain, a noble red pile as rough-hewn as a buffalo. The prairie was at its best that morning, under a brilliant blue sky, with all its myriad flower heads bowing to a steady breeze. The track of the

road was a gravel-gray ribbon edged with white and gold, for perpetually beside it marched a double border of yarrow, pricked with patches of tall false dandelions. Those dandelions which had gone to seed but added to the edging of white. Away from the road in every direction the long, smooth, doming ground swells of the prairie were as brightly colored as a tapestry. Now and then, in New England, you may see a long-neglected field of mowing in the late summer almost as gay, when the goldenrod, the asters, the Queen Anne's lace have run the grass practically out. But it will be only a field, and then woods or pastures or a fence will intervene. But here nothing intervened. The bright tapestry rose and dipped and rose again as far as you could see, acre upon acre of flowers, with the lavender of the bergamots giving it, just then, a basic color—or was it the yellow of the gallardias? It was hard to say.

Coming to an elevation of a hundred feet or more, where our trail branched from the highway and turned up the Two Medicine valley, we faced the main range of the Rockies, shooting up directly out of this bright prairie sea, every foot of them distinct from base to summit, and old Rising Wolf, still with the snow on his shaggy shoulders, close enough almost to cast his shadow over us. A single telephone

wire was strung on low poles beside the trail, and several sparrow hawks were coursing the prairie, and coming frequently to rest on this convenient perch, as they do in the crowded East. The strong breeze, drawing down the valley from the snow-fields and the lake, was suddenly cool, with a peculiar fragrance, subtle and hard to define—the odor of high mountains whereon the snow is melting. We cantered more briskly up the trail to the Two Medicine chalets, on the lower end of the wind-crinkled water. Rising Wolf was now to our right, and ahead of us, sentineling the lake, and splitting into two forks the cañon leading to the leap of the Divide precipice, one of those characteristic sharp pyramids so common in the Rockies. Leaving our horses, we shouldered a pack or two of grub, and made our way on foot up the lakeside, cutting into a dense tangle of low forest and swampy brush.

In the shelter of the woods, out of the wind, it was hot, not a humid, unpleasant heat, but a dry, baking heat which left all your perceptions as acute as ever. As we approached what seemed, from the light through the trees, to be a clearing, I was vaguely aware of something strangely familiar. At first I could not even place the nature of the impression, but as we broke out into the edge of the

clearing, a small meadow drowsy with the hot noonday sun, I knew it came to me through my nose. I sniffed hard, still without capturing the elusive suggestion, and then we started across the clearing. Somebody ahead of me bruised something in the grass with his foot—and then I knew! In that still, hot little meadow, ringed with spired evergreens and gay with wild flowers, the smell of wild strawberries spread suddenly on the air. There is no other odor quite like it, and somehow it is always associated in one's memory with hot, still meadows or pastures, with a blue sky and a clean air. I stopped abruptly, looking down into the grass and flowers at my feet just to see the strawberries, and then up to see the great red dome of Rising Wolf above the tree-tops. It was August. At home the wild strawberries would be gone. I knew then what it was I had missed out of my summer—the smell of wild strawberries on the mountain air; of wild strawberries reddening the sparse grass of the High Farm pastures through which you pass to reach the cave where Hawthorne and Herman Melville once took refuge from a thunderstorm (and talked, probably, of how long it would be before the sun came out); of wild strawberries thick in the grass of my own pastures, rising up the slopes to the mountain forest; of wild straw-

berries gathered by stained fingers into pails and made into the most ambrosial jam this poor world knows; of wild strawberries in a mossy turf on the edge of a meadow close to the white-pine woods, where their delectable odor mixes with the resinous fragrance of the pines as the hot July sun bakes them, and two miles away my own mountain domes against a blue sky, even as Rising Wolf was doming here.

I sat down plump in the middle of the little meadow, and began to eat wild strawberries as if my life depended on it. It was the first and only time I was ever homesick in the western mountains.

The rest, who didn't wish "to spoil their luncheon" (fancy being able to pick enough wild strawberries to have any appreciable effect on a healthy appetite!), went on across the clearing, and left me to follow when I would. I found them presently on the narrow beach of the lake, with a merry fire burning eagerly in a wind which came down from the snow-fields on Rising Wolf and was further cooled by crossing the water, chasing little white-capped waves up to our feet so that we lunched to the pleasant pounding of a miniature surf. It was our last camp fire for the summer, our farewell to the Rockies, and we lingered over it long after its actual service was performed, dousing it reluctantly

with water from the baby breakers when at last we had to leave.

The odor of wild strawberries was less pungent in the clearing when we crossed it once more, or so it seemed to me, perhaps because we entered with the wind, perhaps because the sun was lower, perhaps because my mood had passed. We trotted back to the railroad, through the rolling acres of prairie color, and sat down to dinner in a great hotel, clad in the garments of respectability. It was dark when the night express came thundering in, like a fiery serpent emerging from the black pass. Over the peaks of the mountains, however, the sky was still light, and the snow-fields were luminous as if they were composed of white phosphorus. The cool night wind drew steadily down from those high places, and we felt it to the last—felt it on our cheeks and in our nostrils, until we entered the cars, and suddenly were engulfed in their stale, sickening odor. I got to bed as soon as possible, and dreamed of wild strawberries.

II

Lake Chelan

LAKE CHELAN

EFORE I went to Lake Chelan, I had never even heard of it, which no doubt proves my lack of acquaintance with the map of Washington, on which it occupies no inconspicuous place, as any body of water must which is more than fifty miles long. That was several years ago, yet even to-day I meet few people who do not greet the name with a query, "And where *is* Lake Chelan?" The East is still but little acquainted with the Cascade Mountains, excepting, of course, Mount Rainier, and even less acquainted, perhaps, with the inaccessible Olympics. Yet in the Cascades are probably the two most difficult Alpine or snow climbs in the United States, and the two most extraordinary and beautiful lakes. Washington has the most difficult climb—the north wall of Mount Baker, and the second most beautiful lake, Chelan. Oregon has the most beautiful and wonderful body of water, Crater Lake, and the second most difficult climb, Mount Jefferson. So honors are even, and

that is well, as you will agree if you are acquainted with the inhabitants of those two states.

To reach Lake Chelan we left the main line of the Great Northern at Wenatchee, a town perched on the steep bank of the Columbia River and dedicated to the production of apples and cherries. It was, indeed, cherry time when we arrived, a fact which considerably delayed our departure. Opinions differ regarding the merits of Oregon and Washington apples, though the quality is undoubtedly improving under experimentation. But the Bing cherry admits of no dispute. It is essentially a product of the Northwest, and apparently doesn't thrive elsewhere. But the deep, volcanic soil, the equable climate, and the irrigation-controlled moisture, seem peculiarly to favor all the varieties of cherries which are grown there. They attain a size, a firmness, a bloom, and a flavor, which alone would have justified all Whitman's exertions on that famous ride.

The Columbia comes down to Wenatchee from the north, on the easterly side of the Cascade barrier, which is visible from the heights above the town. The main line of the railroad follows up the confluent Wenatchee River, to find a way through the mountains; but a branch line follows the Columbia northward, and it is this branch you take

to reach Lake Chelan, getting off at Chelan Falls, where the station sits close to the edge of the softly hissing great green stream, and the bank rises steeply up for several hundred feet, shutting you into a cañon. Out of this cañon a dusty road rises by a series of switchbacks—a road unprotected by fence or wall, cut into the face of the bank. It brings you up on a level shelf, bounded by green hills and fertile with new orchards; and you cross this shelf for two or three miles, to reach a little town on the shore of a green lake, a lake perhaps five miles long, ending against the doming green hills. Here we transferred our luggage to a motor boat that seemed ridiculously seaworthy and powerful for so small a body of water, and chug-chugged our way northwestward, up the lake. Out on the water, we could see the green checkerboards of the new orchards sloping everywhere down to the shore line, and the new "ranch" houses springing up among them, for this was boom country, but newly opened to the fruit growers. In the crystal-clear, dry air we could plainly see a man hoeing between the rows of new trees, like little green polka dots, and we could even catch the quicksilver flash of the irrigation stream as it followed his hoe. As we moved on across the green water, which gave one a curious sensation of great depth, we began to notice

that two of the doming hills at the upper end of the lake did not meet, but were a gateway through which the lake went on into unseen regions. Soon we were passing through this gateway, and saw that the lake extended yet another five miles, and entered a second gateway, composed of two headlands higher and more rugged than the first. The lake was perhaps three miles wide, and strongly suggested a larger and wilder Hudson River, where it passes between Storm King and the Point.

Through the second gateway we moved on the deep green water, and lo! five miles ahead of us was a third, between headlands still higher, still more rugged and precipitous, looking at last like genuine mountains. The lake, however, grew no wider, though it grew rougher, as a wind came sucking down it. We began to realize it as a long, narrow fiord winding into the heart of the range. All signs of orchards, or indeed of habitation, soon ceased along its banks. Those banks became great down-sloping cliffs of dark basaltic rock, hung with ferns and firs on the ledges, and draped with waterfalls. They offered no chance at all for farm or dwelling. Higher and higher they rose, and more and more precipitous, till they shot sheer out of the water at the base, gradually stepping back in forested terraces to their mountain summits three, four,

five, six thousand feet above the lake. In places there was absolutely no beach at all. The skipper took the boat close in, and we could see the precipice plunge down out of sight into the green depths. The *Mauretania* could lay up alongside and throw out a gangplank to some ledge where a fir tree perched, or a garden of paintbrush and lupine painted the face of the rock. The lake is about sixteen hundred feet deep, which brings its bottom well below sea level, and if it were emptied of water, the hole at the upper end, where the mountain walls are highest, would be from one to three thousand feet deeper than the Grand Cañon of the Colorado.

But there seemed to be no upper end. Being so narrow, Lake Chelan has only to curve the least degree around a headland to shut out the view, and we passed through wild gateway after wild gateway, the last formed by peaks eight thousand feet high, before we came at last, more than fifty miles from our starting point, into the final stretch of water that led to a pier, a small hotel, and a cove of forest huddled at the feet of overhanging snow-clad summits. We had come by water into the very heart of the high Cascades. I think there is no other such approach to mountains in the United States.

Life at the little hotel had much of the democracy

of camping about it. The proprietor was just coming in from the Stehekin River, which rushed down from the snow-fields into the lake immediately behind the strawberry patch, with a string of three-pound trout in his hand.

"How were they biting?" somebody asked him, a foolish question in face of the evidence.

"I had to hide behind a tree to bait my hook," he answered.

At dinner we chanced to talk about the theory that goitre can result from an excessive drinking of snow water. Our waitress was an interested listener, and at last she could contain herself no longer, for pride.

"I got a goitre!" she beamed.

Of course we christened her Queenie, in honor of the sister of Herman and Verman, whom Penrod and Sam so admired because of a similar possession. After supper Queenie was one of the belles of the ball, held in the hotel lobby with a phonograph for orchestra. The proprietor had put on a coat for the occasion, but soon removed it again. And outside, in the northern twilight, the lake lay in deep, night shadow, beneath the beetling cliffs, while six thousand feet aloft the sentinel summits were still bright with the departed day.

Lake Chelan lies in a national forest, and there

are many ranger trails to ride, but unfortunately we were "doing" the lake as a side trip, and our time was limited. We could choose but one, and that one must not take us far afield. So, when morning came, we chose the trail up War Creek Pass, which leads over the northern wall, at the head of the lake, climbing to an altitude of nearly eight thousand feet. The ascent began, of course, almost immediately, but there was a brief half mile through heavy woods along the lake shore, and here I saw my first foxgloves growing wild—saw them, I confess, with bitter envy.

How we, in the East, toil to achieve foxgloves! Tender biennials, we grow hundreds of little plants, and then try every known device to winter them for the next season's blooming. I have planted them in the currant bushes; I have planted them in cold frames; I have covered them with straw, with pine boughs, with dead leaves; I have left them uncovered. I have prayed for them—and cursed them. And sometimes they live through, and sometimes they don't. Never do all of them survive, and often none of them survives. But here, in an open glade by Lake Chelan, surrounded by great fir and cedar trees, and under the very shadow of the snow-capped peaks, were dozens and dozens of foxgloves, growing without any care, wild flowers like weeds,

and almost as tall as a man, magnificent great spikes of pure white, and of white mottled with pink. There wasn't a magenta flower in the whole garden! I have always said our eastern showy lady's-slipper (*cypripedium spectabile*) is the queen of wild flowers, but a stately white foxglove plant in a glade of the forest by Lake Chelan is certainly a dangerous rival.

The trail now began to ascend, always steeply, by longer or shorter switchbacks, sometimes over open slopes and ledges of volcanic soil, sometimes through forest. At first the way was bordered with flowering shrubs in great profusion, the most conspicuous being the capberry, a large bush with copious blossoms not unlike small white wild roses, and the showy goat's-beard, with its spirea-like white plumes. As the trail began to come out on dizzy ledges far above the water, however, the slopes of powdery volcanic ash grew still steeper, the shrubs disappeared, and in their place was a great profusion of lower wild flowers—bright orange paintbrush, blue lupine, blue larkspur, in places carpeting the ground almost to the exclusion of the sparse grass, and wandering among the great brown boles of the forest trees in bands and threads of color. The trees themselves, for the most part Douglas firs, with a sprinkling of cedars and now and then a deciduous

Lake Chelan from War Creek Trail

variety, did not grow in dense stands. Each tree, two or three feet in diameter and rising straight up for fifty feet without a limb, seemed to preëmpt a certain space for itself, giving to the forested ledges a curious and beautiful park-like aspect. Brown tree boles like temple columns, bright orange and blue carpets of flowers, and between the columns and over the flowers, the eye roving to glimpse the green water far below, and across the water the great eight-thousand-foot leap of Castle Rock, and beyond that the eternal snow-fields: here are hanging gardens, indeed.

Above these gardens we very soon came to the lower edge of the drifts. These drifts came down like long white fingers into the diminishing forest, and they were melting back rapidly, the wild flowers following them, so that dog-tooth violets would sometimes be in full bloom not six feet from a wall of snow. At six thousand feet the evergreens still held on, and while they were stunted, they were not perceptibly storm-scarred. In the next thousand feet, however, they rapidly gave way to small hardwoods, a curious little forest of gray trunks, half of them dead and either fallen or leaning on their neighbors, ghostlike against the gray, volcanic rocks. Before the final pull up to the col which is the summit of the pass, a mere depression between two

naked stone heaps, and well over seven thousand feet above sea level, the trees ceased entirely, leaving the ridge desolate and wild—fit preparation for the prospect that greets you when you reach the top.

What a world! All across the western sky, sweeping northward as far as the eye can see, sweeping southward so near you can almost touch them, and then bending to the east, advancing upon you like the tossed and stormy crest of some gigantic wave, are the Cascade Mountains, white-capped with snow, foam-furrowed with glaciers, and deep in their hollows dark with forests. Away in the northwest, blue and cloud-white, almost hanging in the air, is Mount Baker. Behind you, and six thousand feet almost directly below you, is the opalescent green water of Lake Chelan, with Castle Rock shooting up on the farther side, and not far to the left, and seeming but a few miles away, the splendid cone of Glacier Peak, with its white glacier spreading long tentacles down its sides, as if some strange octopus of ice had perched upon the summit.

I looked long and wistfully at this mountain, realizing that with a few more days to spare we could have ridden the trail around to its base, and tackled one of those long ice arms leading to its summit mysteries of frozen silence.

We made our camp at almost six thousand feet, near the lower end of a melting drift that ran crystal-cold water over the ground and fed the roots of the violets. And we thought of Queenie as we drank. Our tents were strung between the boles of sheltering fir trees, and we saw, between the brown trunks, the cloud shadows trail over the green water far below, flushing it to amethyst; we saw the sun sink behind the snow-clad pyramids of the Cascade Divide, and the rosy blush linger on the white cap of Glacier Peak. Then we saw night fill up the vast hole where the lake lay bosomed, and we felt the cold come down from the naked col above us. In the hotel, far below, the guests could then see our camp fire leap up anew, like a star that was caught on the mountain.

North Fork of Bridge Creek, above Lake Chelan

III

Interlude

On the Hills of Home

ON THE HILLS OF HOME—THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

LITTLE friend of mine who came back to the Berkshires after a trip through the Rockies, and remarked, "Father, this is practically a prairie," expressed the feeling all of us have when we first return to our tamer environment, from the big places. How well I remember, as a small boy, thrilling to a sharp escarpment of rock which rose near the railroad track on the way from my home to Boston—I think it was in a place called Middlesex Fells. My regret was that this rock face wasn't in my own town, so I could climb its thrilling inclination. Then, one summer, we went to the White Mountains. On our return, I looked for my rock face as the train passed by. To my amazement, I could hardly detect it. It had shrunk to insignificance! Not until almost Christmas time had my memory of Tuckerman's Ravine sufficiently faded for that little cliff in Middlesex Fells to reassume its rightful proportions. It is difficult, whatever our age, to prevent this sort of shrinkage

at home, when we return from abroad. Yet we should, I think, take thought to prevent it, because it seems to be unfortunately true that the people who, as a class, will make the effort to preserve and develop our native wilderness, are the people who have loved and tramped the larger wildernesses. The stay-at-home is seldom actively appreciative of his environment. Somebody else has to impart the impulse to him. So never undervalue your back yard boulder!

I live under the shadow of Mount Everett, the second-highest mountain in Massachusetts. It is a noble, dome-shaped summit, rising from a ten-mile-long rampart, with steep shoulders dropping precipitously down to the Housatonic plain. My own forests go up its side to the 2,000 foot level, and the summit rises 600 feet above that level, and a mile or so back across an upland scrub forest. To north and south, for ten miles, along this percipitous eastern wall of the buttress are many ravines, one, at least, clothed with virgin hemlock, and musical with falling water. In a season of comfortable precipitation, there are no less than four groups of tumbling waterfalls along this mountainside, and in three of them the water lasts through a drought. There is also a spur of the mountain which juts sharply out to the east, with a precipitous rock face

on the southern side, known as Black Rock. In the crevices of this rock face, and if the day is warm on its ledges, live rattlesnakes, a thriving colony of them which persistent annual hunting by Dr. Ditmars of the Bronx Zoo, and by local snake admirers, has failed to exterminate, or even, seemingly, to diminish. The face of Black Rock, and the ravines down which the brooks tumble, are extremely steep, in places so precipitous that I often take a rope along when some party of guests on a picnic want to climb, and lay a railing for their assistance. Between these ravines, the whole wall is well timbered, and even more heavily clothed with an undergrowth of laurel. It is wild, up-ended country, where the deer roam and an occasional wildcat.

Back of the 2,000 foot ridge, sloping much more gradually to the summit dome, is a region of smaller timber, jack pines, scrub oak, azalea, with hemlocks and birch in the fertile hollows. All this region surrounding the dome, as well as the summit itself, is a Massachusetts State reservation. On the peak is a steel fire observation tower, though the summit vegetation is storm dwarfed and no tower is needed for ordinary lookout.

Just under the dome, to the north, and within the reservation, is a lovely pond. It lies more than 2,000 feet above sea level, covers probably forty

acres, and is completely surrounded by hemlocks, which march down almost to the rocky shore line, to look at their reflections over the tops of the laurel bushes. In June, when the pink laurel borders the dark brown water of this mountain tarn, the hemlocks, with storm-twisted limbs, rise against a blue sky, and from the pathless woods ring the songs of the hermit thrushes, it would be hard to find a lovelier spot, even in the Rockies themselves. It is pleasant to scramble up the ravine from my house, with a blanket roll and a pack, to build a little fire beside this tarn, to hear the hermits blow their elfin clarions in the depths of the hemlocks, to watch the stars come out over the summit dome, and to drop off to sleep while the bullfrogs along the margin of the pond twang their G strings, deep answering unto deep.

That is one face of the medal. The other is not so pleasant to contemplate. This really rather splendid mountain, wild, rugged, picturesque, for all its meagre 2,600 feet of height, is practically undeveloped for recreational purposes—and, of course, it is fit for very little else. There is no trail up any of the ravines. There are two old roads, laid out a hundred and fifty years ago and long since abandoned because of their steepness, which go up from the east, and in places are still open enough to

follow, though the laurel is fast closing them in. Along my north boundary, the telephone wire to the observation tower goes straight up, and a trail is kept clear below it by the repair men. This is at present the only really cleared trail to the top, but it is extremely steep, passes by no water, and is uninteresting except as a means for attaining violent exercise. There is no trail whatever around Guilder Pond, the beautiful mountain tarn under the dome. To get around it, you have to fight your way through forest and rank undergrowth. No clearings have been made by its shore, no camping sites, no provision for safe fires. So far as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is concerned, which through a commission of three men no doubt chosen for their political affiliations rather than their interest in recreation, administers the affairs of the summit acres of Mount Everett, nothing is of any importance but the construction of a so-called motor road up from the high plateau on the west side. This road passes one end of Guilder Pond and then starts up the summit dome. Beyond the pond, nobody uses it. The money gave out, anyhow, before it reached the summit, and it now ends nowhere—an ugly scar on the side of the cone. Any person of seventy-five years, in average health, could easily walk to the summit, up the footpath from Guilder

Pond. There was never the slightest need for the road. It is a pathetic monument to the stupidity and blindness of politically appointed reservation commissioners.

What the commissioners should have done, of course, was to open up so much of the summit forests as they controlled to campers and hikers. There should be a trail around the pond, with several camp clearings, including fire pits, lean-to shelters, refuse disposal pits and neat signs, copied from those of the United States Forest Service in the West, instructing people in the proper use of fire, of camps, of the public domain. There should be trails leading from the base of the summit cone to two or three of the most interesting lines of descent into the Housatonic valley, and after they were built, or cleared out, the coöperation of individuals or organizations in the valley should have been secured to connect them up with the highroad below. The most interesting descent of all, that through the ravine of virgin hemlocks—and how few stands of virgin timber there are left in Massachusetts!—is controlled by the Commonwealth nearly to the base of the cliffs, and from there on the coöperation of the boys of the Berkshire School could doubtless be secured to keep the trail open and posted. As it is, nothing has been done, as

I write, to clear out the devastation of the great ice storm of November 1921, there are no blazes, no trail, and when I recently sent up a party of twenty hikers, members of the Appalachian Club from Boston, by that route, it was with considerable misgiving, since half of them were women. They were in for a severe two hours.

If you stand on the summit of Mount Everett and look due north, you see fifty miles away the blue hump of Greylock, in the extreme northwestern corner of the State. Greylock is the only mountain in Massachusetts rising more than 3,000 feet. Because of that fact, there was a road to the top before the Commonwealth took over the summit mass for a reservation. It is also provided with foot trails, some of which, however, in recent years have been allowed to close in so that they are difficult, if not dangerous to follow. The Greylock Reservation Commission, none the less, have always shown a real regard for the mountain, and a vision of recreational development. They have at least provided a camp site.

As you look northward from the Dome to Greylock, you can observe the intervening topography. The two summits, in the two western corners of the State, are at either end of a more or less unbroken spine, which practically forms the Massachusetts-

New York boundary. East of the spine (which is called the Taconic Ridge), lies a plain, with scattered mountains in it, averaging about 2,000 feet in height. Then the land rises sharply again to the wild, broken upland plateau which is the main range of the Berkshires, the main link in the long Appalachian chain, the Taconic Ridge being a slender side link, as it were. It is perfectly obvious, however, that when the Appalachian Trail is built, if that fascinating project ever is carried out, it must enter Massachusetts from Connecticut over the dome of Mount Everett, and it must enter Vermont from Massachusetts down the Bellows Pipe ravine of Greylock. It must surely include, in other words, the two major summits of the State. The real problem is—how to get it from one peak to the other. . . .

There is, alas, very little chance that the Appalachian Trail will be constructed before this book is published, so this may be a suitable place, before going further, to say something about that project. It is the dream of Mr. Benton MacKaye and others to build a skyline trail from northern Georgia, where the Appalachian chain begins, to the northeastern outposts of the White Mountains, where it ends. It would, of course, be a foot trail only, and in many sections it could hardly be more than a

blazed trail. It would take in, so far as possible, all the major summits, from Klingman's Dome to Washington, and in general it would follow the top of the highest spine. The project, which at first glance sounds both impractical and a trifle silly, has in reality a great deal to recommend it to the enthusiastic interest of all lovers of the out-of-doors, all conservationists, all believers in the increased need, as our civilization speeds up, of periodic vacations to the wilderness.

The Appalachian Trail would exist in its entirety chiefly for a symbol—that is, nobody, or practically nobody, would ever tramp more than a fraction of its length. But if it existed, and if each individual section were built and maintained (as will have to be the case), by a local organization or organizations, these organizations would be spurred to do their task well by the thought that they made the necessary link in the long chain; and, further, by gathering these organizations together for conferences, the people of the East would come more and more in touch with all that was being thought and done in the field of recreational conservation.

For, ultimately, the Long Trail would be a skyborne symbol of recreational conservation, physical and spiritual. All through the southern Appalachians, whether it follows the Great Smokies or the

Blue Ridge across North Carolina, and up through Virginia, the Trail will open up a wilderness which has got very speedily to be put into the National Forest domain, or serious consequences will follow. It is a region of extraordinary floral richness and scenic beauty, but at present for the most part inaccessible to any but the hardiest trampers, and even they would find the task of following the sky-line ridge practically impossible. In that land of copious rain, the laurel and rhododendron "hells" are the equal of any tropic jungle growth for stopping progress and bewildering the stranger who penetrates into them. If, however, the aid of the southern mountain men could once be secured to open a trail along the range, and trampers from the plains, from all parts of the country, could get up on those splendid peaks (North Carolina has several mountains higher than Mount Washington), and could drop down into those wild, deep coves between, where the clear brown water tumbles and the wild flowers riot, and the great hardwoods rise tall and straight as masts (when the lumbermen haven't been in), and in sudden clearings, come upon without warning, the rough gray cabins of the mountain folk doze under pink geysers of peach blossoms, there would be a national awakening to the beauty of our southern highlands, and certainly

the dim beginnings of an awakening to the need for forest conservation. Side trails, of course, would lead down to such points as Asheville and Virginia Hot Springs. The Long Trail would be made accessible in sections. It would, properly laid out, open a vast region for recreation, and form the necessary entering wedge of the forest conservation drive. For, be it noted, you can talk forest conservation till you are exhausted, without results. But take your man into the wilderness, on a tramp, show him the woods, the falling water, the richly clothed mountain slopes; and then the naked scar of a typical lumber job, the slash, the fire, the dried-up brook bed, the washed- or burnt-out soil, the rich earth made desert for a hundred years—and you have accomplished what argument cannot do.

I am getting a bit nearer home, now, and the end of my digression. It is planned to bring the Appalachian Trail into New England from New York State near the town of Kent, Connecticut, taking it through a Connecticut State reservation at that point. It will then come up along the hills, through a beautiful, high country easily accessible from the Housatonic valley for week-end tramping, being but two or three hours removed from New York City, and will enter Massachusetts along the ridge of Mount Everett. One would naturally

suppose that the Mount Everett Reservation commissioners would awake sufficiently to carry it over the Dome and around the shore of Guilder Pond, where lean-to shelters would be constructed similar to those of the Appalachian Club in the White Mountains, and proper fire pits and camp facilities provided. From this point to Greylock, the route of the Trail is, as I write, problematical (for that matter, the whole Trail is problematical!), and the possibilities open interesting discussion.

However it goes, it must for the most part traverse private property. How far can the traditional Yankee attitude toward the sacredness of private property, the taboo of trespass, be overcome? What will be the result if it is overcome? If enough amenable private owners across Massachusetts can be found to route the Trail, will not each one of them become an interested agent for its maintenance and development? Or will their confidence be abused by the trampers, and the rights withdrawn?

Again, shall the Trail follow the air line route, which is the Taconic Ridge? That is the short way. But it is also the way that lies farthest from the valley towns to the east where the help must come to build the Trail, and makes the Trail relatively inaccessible for one day tramps by the summer folk

and week-end visitors. Chiefly, however, it seems to me, this route is the poorest because it ignores the opportunity to employ the Long Trail as a potent weapon in the conservation campaign.

Looking northeast from the Dome, across the plain of the Housatonic just above the town of Sheffield, you see a rugged, forested ridge thrusting out from the Berkshire range. If the Long Trail were carried across the plain to this ridge, it could ascend it at once, and run a few miles northeasterly into a Massachusetts State forest of eight thousand acres. A forest of eight thousand acres would seem a mere grove in Oregon, but in Massachusetts it is considerable. This forest is on what is known as the Beartown Plateau. It is about two thousand feet above sea level, and though it boasted a considerable community a hundred years ago, is now gone back to wilderness. Few people ever go there. It is not in any way developed for recreational purposes, it is inaccessible, and, if I may say so, not properly advertised. To take the Long Trail into it would be to advertise it—that is, to advertise the whole idea of forest conservation. It is unfortunately true that you can tell a man over and over how short sighted it is to deforest the country, you can point out that Massachusetts now has to import eighty per cent. of its lumber, at ex-

tremely high prices, that in ten years even the western supply will be gone, and so on, and so forth, while he remains indifferent, or, at the most, he fears that reforestation means more taxes. But if he has a piece of woodland which he enjoys for recreation purposes, the prospect of putting it ruthlessly to the ax rouses him at once. Having won with difficulty from a reluctant legislature a piece of State forest, those in charge cannot possibly do better than to open it immediately to the public for recreation. Build trails (useful also, of course, for fire fighting), build camp sites, rent permanent camps under proper restrictions, develop the recreational features, get the public in and give them the joy of the wilderness—and you have created automatically a group of people to fight the battle of conservation, whom no arguments can rally.

So I would take the Long Trail into the Beartown State Forest, where, I feel sure, the Forest Service would give enthusiastic assistance. The trail to the forest boundary would have to be constructed by local organizations, and the mere building of it would advertise the forest. Once built, it would carry an ever larger number of people, from near and far, into a conserved wilderness, and show them at first hand what timber conservation means.

But north of the Beartown Forest, about a day's

hike, lies a second State forest of more than ten thousand acres, the former William C. Whitney's game preserve on October Mountain. To reach it the Long Trail would have to descend from Beartown into the beautiful Hop Brook valley, where the little village of Tyringham offers a chance to provision for those on an extended hike, or a convenient starting point, in either direction, for those wishing merely to tramp for a day or two into the State forests. Directly north of Tyringham the Trail would rise sharply, beside a tumbling brook, and in three or four miles reach a fine body of water, in a bowl of the wooded hills, called Goose Pond. Here those organizations in charge of the trail building should, if possible, secure a section of lake front, and establish a camp site. The Trail keeps on north, across the trans-State highway, and speedily reaches a five-mile tract of roadless mountain wilderness. Just north of this lies the October Mountain reservation. There is a fine spruce forest coming up on this reservation, there are brooks and a small pond, there are even moose. From the higher elevations a view of the distant Catskills, huddled on the western horizon, can be had on clear days. It is a wild, beautiful spot, admirably adapted for a recreational retreat.

From the October Mountain forest the Trail

could descend, by the Roaring Brook ravine, to New Lenox, cross Yokun Seat between Lenox and Pittsfield, and speedily reach the Taconic Ridge again, easily accessible from the city of Pittsfield, and run directly up to Greylock.

I have been thus specific about my own little section of the Appalachian Trail because that is the section I know best—even better than the White Mountain section, where so much of the work has already been done by the Appalachian Club, to the eternal gratitude of thousands of climbers; and because it illustrates so well, I feel, the opportunities for practical service which lie in this at first seemingly visionary scheme for a skyline path from Georgia to Maine. To build that Trail as I have roughly routed it across western Massachusetts, from the Dome to Greylock, would require the cooperation of two Reservation Commissions, of the State Forest department, of organizations in all the towns concerned, such as chambers of commerce, outing clubs, village improvement societies, Boy Scouts, and branches of the Appalachian Club, of scores and scores of property owners whose assistance would be essential, and finally of the officers of the New England Trails Club and others concerned with the larger aspect of the work. Such coöperative council in itself, apart from the actual Trail,

would be a wonderful thing. If it could be brought about, and if the Trail could be put through, I myself have little doubt but the ultimate result would be an insistent demand from many quarters for an extension of the State forests and reservations, even for the taking over by the Commonwealth of the more desirable camping places and the points of greatest scenic interest. We have, in the East, no national park at all, except on Mount Desert Island, and our national forest area is absurdly tiny. Yet it is in the East, rather than the West, that we actually need such areas most. The Long Trail might well be the beginning of the conversion of the Appalachian range into a public domain, to conserve our timber, our water and our souls' health forever. Wilder dreams have come true, at any rate. . . .

Have you ever built a trail? There is no more strenuous and delightful occupation. If the Long Trail is ever constructed, I hope it will be with the maximum of volunteer labor, and the minimum of money contributions employed to hire help. Vacation gangs of young men and men not so young, cooped up for a year in cities, ought to be turned loose on the sky-line ridges, to tramp and chop their way back to rugged muscles and animal appetites and spiritual freedom. Nor will the work ever be

finished—Nature will attend to that. Every year the Trail will have to be cleared, every year the outing clubs can do their bit.

To build a trail, the preliminary survey must be carefully made. Excepting for general direction, maps are of little service. Field-glasses help more. But chiefly one comes to rely on instinct. You have, let us say, to get from one summit to another, following a spine or connecting col, and perhaps crossing a ravine. Three things must be thought of—the shortest route, the best footage, the easiest future maintenance. A fourth consideration, never to be neglected, is the outlook, or the scenic charm. On your preliminary, or survey hike, over this stretch, you will, after some experience in such work, find your eye instinctively roving just ahead through the timber, the scrub or the bushes, and picking out the way which offers the easiest footing and the least contact with foliage, but without diverging too much from the set direction. Follow that trail your instinct picks out, blazing it very lightly, and pausing rather frequently, at open places, to fix your direction and to look for any attractive features that you may be passing. After attaining your objective, return over the same country, again trusting your trail instinct to pick out the best way. You will be surprised to find how nearly

your two paths will coincide, except up or down exceptionally steep places. There your instinct on the descent is usually to pick places you do not choose when ascending. Always plan the trail by your ascending instinct! This reconnoitering for a piece of trail is a fascinating game, and one which Boy Scouts could be taught greatly to enjoy.

When the trail is reconnoitered thoroughly, and you have made sure that it does not unwittingly miss a pleasant outlook or a good camping site, where there is wood, water and the possibilities of shelter, the task of building it can begin. And it is a task, if you expect to sleep in a bed in the valley every night. Climbing two thousand feet every morning to work, chopping all day, and descending two thousand feet again in the evening, is not recreation. Take a tent (or better, build a shelter beside the trail, and leave it there), provisions, tools and the right companions, and go up on the hills to live with your job. That is the way to do it.

The first rule in building a trail is to cut it wide enough. And the most difficult task in bossing enthusiastic amateur trail builders is to persuade them of this fact. They are all for slashing ahead and making distance. A narrow trail means no trail by the second year, and even before the first season is over it means ingrowing branches and soaked cloth-

ing during or after a rain. You will want light axes, pruning shears, a couple of grub hoes—and a portable grindstone. Through brush and scrub, clear the trail at least six feet wide, and better eight. This will seem needless to you, for a foot trail, but it means an enormous saving of labor in future seasons. Grub out the stumps of such little trees and bushes as sprout a sucker growth—gray birch and white ash, for example. And don't heap the slash alongside of the trail, so that the spring growth will come up through it and make a horrid tangle to cut in the next season. Throw the slash clear out of the trail. Avoid, if possible, taking the trail through wet places, or places likely to be boggy after a rain, but if you cannot avoid them, look about for stones to sink in the footing, or lay logs on the higher side of the slope (never on the lower, for they will rot into little dams and increase the bogginess). In the larger timber, remove all fallen trees across the way, by cutting out a four-foot section, and make your blazes in accordance with the custom prescribed by the trail clubs of your region. In general, avoid cutting any sizable standing timber, and don't try to improve the footing, except to remove undergrowth. Any digging on the forest floor usually means erosion the next spring, and a rougher surface than before. Be content, through

forest, with a well blazed trail, cleaned six or eight feet wide of undergrowth with clear vistas, *going or coming,* between blazes. Finally, on open rock spaces, or crossing fields or pastures, remember that there are fogs and clouds, while even in clear weather some people demand to be constantly reassured they are on the right road. Build stone cairns on the open rocks, not more than a hundred feet apart if the ridge is a high one, and not more than fifty feet apart if there is a precipice near by. Be sure these cairns are plainly artificial. When the trail crosses a field or pasture, have a conspicuous marker—a sign, bearing the name of the trail, of the organization erecting it, and the directions, is best—at each entrance. If these entrances are not visible one from the other, there should be a marker midway between.

Now, when you and your gang have got up into the mountain forest, into the dense stands of laurel, for instance, which clothe so much of Mount Everett, or into the storm-dwarfed, steel wire spruce which bristles over the upper rocks of the White Mountains, and have started cutting through a six or eight foot swathe, you will speedily discover that you aren't going to progress many miles per day. You will discover muscles that you never knew you had before, you will raise blisters on your hands

which you thought impervious, you will get hot and thirsty and tired. But when the afternoon shadows begin to steal down from the peak, when from some viewpoint, some rock headland you have won that day, you see the twilight creeping into the valley while the far hills are putting on their amethyst, and you shoulder your tools and tramp back over the bit of trail which has opened behind your axes, and bathe hot faces in the cold mountain brook and sniff the coffee boiling over the fire, and sit wearily down on the ground (reaching first for your sweater) to await the evening meal—then suddenly a great peace and contentment will come over you, and you will know the reason for your toil. When the bacon and flapjacks are consumed, and pipes are lighted, and the talk drowses while twilight comes up the slope, you will hear the thrushes singing, you will hear a sea-shell murmur in the evergreens, you will hear the crackle of the evening camp fire, and that is all. It is enough. Perhaps, however, you in your section of the Long Trail will hear a distant locomotive whistle, the faint bay of a dog in the valley, a motor horn—but far away, as in a dream. The stars will be much nearer to you, as they swing down over the dark tree tops through which you glimpse them as, rolled in your blanket, you fight the invasion of sleep to enjoy for a last moment

the delicious languor of healthy physical weariness.

How many such camps would there be, I wonder, if the Appalachian Trail should be built in a year, section by section, from Georgia to Maine? Hundreds and hundreds of camps, thousands and thousands of men finding, not perhaps what William James called "the moral equivalent of war," but certainly the physical and in no small measure the spiritual equivalent of pioneering. To me it is a splendid vision. . . .

A few years ago a friend and I set out to blaze a three-mile trail over a timbered mountain spine not far from our home in the Berkshires. It was to connect two existing trails, and add to the number of attractive tramps near the village. We secured the owner's permission, and spent several happy afternoons picking out a route which was not too difficult, but which took in several somewhat precipitous ledges where the spleenworts made fairy gardens in the shadowed crevices, the columbines were red in spring, and the bluebells nodded. The actual work of trail-making was slight, consisting almost entirely of blazing the big trees, and signing the two entrances. We had the satisfaction, later, of seeing the trail sufficiently used to pack a track on the forest floor.

But it was on private property, and private property is subject to private needs and vicissitudes. A year later the timber on that ridge was sold. Our trail was obliterated. And not only that, but the wild woodland charm of that three-mile ridge was obliterated with it. The ridge is now nothing but naked rock and slash. Except for the pleasure we got in doing it, our work went for nothing. The incident in itself is insignificant, but it illustrates a difficulty and a danger those who are planning the Appalachian Trail must face. The more private property that trail traverses, the greater the danger of hard work gone for nothing, the more public property, State and National forests, town forests, parks, reservations, the Trail traverses, the less the difficulty and the danger, the greater the chance for permanent use and maintenance. Let us not stop with a mere dream of an Appalachian Trail. Let us dream of an Appalachian Reservation, from Georgia to the Presidentials. Dreams, they say, are suppressed desires. That dream is our desire, perhaps, suppressed by the cant of modern industrial and mechanical society, for the wilderness beauties, the wilderness health, the wilderness virtues, which we have so largely lost. They are waiting for us on the skyline trail.

IV

Crater Lake

BIRDS OF THE ROGUE RIVER

OUTHERN Oregon can be extremely hot and dry in early July. We had motored leisurely down the Pacific Highway from Portland, camping at night by some brook near the road, and reached the clean, pleasant, lively little city of Medford on the second of the month. Medford lies in a level plain between the Cascade range on the east, dominated by the snow-covered volcanic cone of Mount McLaughlin, and the heavily timbered Siskiyou range on the west. The plain is extremely fertile, but extremely well protected from rainfall. That, of course, does not matter to the farmers and fruit growers, with limitless water for irrigation coming down from the hills; but it affects the visitor unpleasantly at first, because the soil becomes baked hard as a brick, and the side roads, which are not macadamized, are powdered to a fine white pumice dust. Medford is one of the chief starting-points for Crater Lake, and we had intended to remain there only long enough

to stock up with provisions. We learned, however, that the upper end of the road to the rim of the lake was still deep in snow, and it would be three or four days at least before the Park rangers got it shoveled out so cars could pass. There was nothing to do but wait, in a withering heat that made it seem incredible any roads could be snow-blocked only eighty miles away.

So we went back up the Highway a dozen miles, till we reached the Rogue River, which comes pouring down from the Cascades, and turned up a side road which paralleled the stream. Not far up this road we came upon a house sitting under two enormous trees, and backed by a grove of other large trees, with bark like smooth plates of copper and the glossy leaves of a laurel. This house was evidently of extreme antiquity—for Oregon. It dated, indeed, from the gold-rush days. It was rather long and low, with the simplest possible lines, and roofed with split "shakes" (a characteristic feature of the Northwest), which had weathered a lovely, soft gray. Two goats were watching us from the bank in front, suggesting that somebody lived here. A moment later, indeed, the resident appeared, coming down the hill slope across the road with an old prospector's pick on his shoulder. He was a man well past middle life, who spoke with a

pronounced Yankee twang, and confessed that his home was Rhode Island. He also confessed that he would like to go back there, but didn't have the money. His search for gold had now become but a forlorn hope that he might strike enough to buy a ticket " back East." He was, meanwhile, living in a room of this old house, which he had provided with a padlock. Opening the door, he invited us into a room which boasted a stone fireplace, around which the original builder had erected a mantel so evidently modeled, with the rough boards at his disposal, from his memory of a Colonial mantel, that it gave me a strange shock of surprise. He had even attempted, with narrow strips of wood, to panel pilasters at the side. Then I thought of the nearest town—Medford; and of the towns we had passed through on our way—Portland, Salem, for example. Those names told the story, no less than this echo of a New England fireplace.

The presence of this gray old house, and this gray old prospector, led us to turn in behind the enclosure, driving over the baked ground and burnt grass as if on pavement, where we found, amid a grove of the coppery laurel trees and the tough manzanita bushes, a pleasant, level opening on the bank of the river. The bank was about fifty feet high, however, for the river has cut down through the volcanic soil

to the underlying gravel, and it was covered with a fine growth of yellow pines and hardwoods. A dim path led down to the river beach, for water and bathing. There were plenty of tough dead manzanita stalks and tree limbs for fuel in our portable cook stove—and we needed no other fire in all conscience. So here we stopped, unloaded the cars, and set up our camp. It turned out to be a place much richer in interest than I had at first supposed possible. The discovery, in the waste heaps of naked, water-worn gravel and hot, dry sand along the river, of the yellow lupine would alone have made it memorable to me. There were thousands of these lupine plants, some of them more than two feet tall and quite as wide, covered thick with flowers of a bright, pure yellow. Many of them had already begun to ripen their seeds, and I gathered quantities of the ripest I could find, hanging the plants in the sun to complete the process. I brought home, I suppose, a pound of these seeds, which in that arid soil produce such glorious bloom —and not a seed ever germinated in my garden!

But the greatest attraction of our Rogue River camp was furnished by the birds. I have seldom, if ever, had so good an opportunity to watch so many birds, and with so little effort. When the Fourth of July came, and with it the news that the

Crater Lake road was still blocked, the rest of the party decided to brave the heat and go down to Medford and Ashland for the day, it being rumored that great doings were afoot in these lively communities. That was just what I wanted. With the old prospector up on the barren hills with his pick, and all our party gone to town, this bit of timber beside the river would be quite undisturbed, and I could watch the birds to my heart's content. When the cars had departed down the road, in a cloud of pumice dust, I got out a large notebook and pencil, I removed a considerable portion of my clothes, and all that day I watched, or scribbled, or wandered softly and quietly through the trees or by the water. When night came, and the celebrants returned, I made a final entry in my notebook, by the light of our camp lantern, and wrote the caption:

A Rogue River Fourth of July

It is the Fourth of July. Everybody else has gone down to Medford, fifteen miles away, leaving me alone in camp. A Fourth of July without firecrackers, without oratory, without people, in fact, but with the blithe association of birds, appealed to me. That is why I am alone.

The Rogue River is a considerable stream, some-

thing over a hundred yards across, with a swift current breaking into rapids just above our camp so that the gentle roar is incessant. Coming as it does directly down the cañons from the main Cascade range, its water is still greenish in color (as all glacier water is), and bitterly cold, as I discovered to my sorrow when I dove off the bank this morning. The bank where our camp is pitched, in a grove of scrubby oak, laurel trees, tall yellow pines, and manzanita bushes, is fifty feet above the water, and I look down on its agitated green floor between the high, straight boles of the long-leaved yellow pines which spring from the base of the bank. I have found a cattle path down through them, which leads by an easy grade to a beach of clean white sand. Just back from the stream, on either side, the wooded hills go up sharply for five or six hundred feet. These cañon hills have been the scene of much prospecting. Last night, getting firewood for the camp, we stumbled over a prospector's pick which fell away from its rotten handle when we lifted it. I have been using it to-day to dig up the bulbs of a small blue lily from the baked ground. Just upstream from the camp, in fact, the bank has been completely dug over to a depth of twenty feet, the excavation extending back several hundred feet into the hill; and not far beyond

that point we discovered the mouth of a shaft, almost hidden by tall mulleins, which went straight into the gravel and volcanic rock as far as the eye could see. As it was untimbered, we did not care to investigate far from the mouth. I have no idea how much gold was ever taken out of these diggings, but it is safe to say that the energy required to move so much stony earth with a pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow would have yielded quite as useful a return applied in some other way. But perhaps without the miners to pioneer we should never have had the fruit orchards down on the plain.

At any rate, the miners have gone now, all but one old prospector from Rhode Island, nature is covering their scars, and I am alone under a brilliant blue sky, for the dry season is on, and the sparse grass in the openings of the wood is already burned brown, the soil packed hard as cement. Alone, did I say? Well, hardly that. I think I have never spent a day in the woods with a more numerous and varied set of companions. One never quite forgets any pleasant camp where he has seen the sun set and the day break, or even where he has stopped to build a little fire and cook the noonday bacon. But this camp above the rushing Rogue River will always stand out in memory above most of its fellows because of its bird life, because I made so

many new friends here, and saw again so many old ones; because for a whole long summer day the life of the woods, in the air and on the ground, went on about me quite as if I didn't exist, and all I had to do was to drag out my pneumatic sleeping bag from the tent into the shade of an oak tree and lie upon it quietly, to be a part of the forest community.

The day began well when I went down to the river to bathe. Three mallard ducks, evidently feeding in a shallow under some willow shrubs, scooted out over the water, and as I was dressing a Canada goose went by, neck out, beating with great, strong wings his splendid way up the gorge. It was scarcely three minutes later that a shadow, like a quick, darting wraith, swept the beach, and I looked up to see three fish-hawks over the water, circling steadily. Even as I watched, one of them dove in midstream, went clean under like a dropped plummet, remained submerged while I counted four slowly, and then came forth again and took the air without apparent effort, bearing a good-sized fish in its talons. I would have been quite content with this exhibition before breakfast, but on my way up the bank to camp, I saw the flash of a big bird in an oak tree, and then of another. Stalking them as quietly as I could over the crackling dead

leaves, I got within clear vision of a pair of ravens before they sounded guttural alarm and took flight. Unlike Samuel Scoville, I had never scaled a precipice to see a raven's nest. Indeed, so far as I know, I had never seen a wild raven before. Just why it should be so exciting to see a bird that is new to you, for the first time, I cannot say. Probably it isn't exciting to a great many people. But all bird lovers will know how I felt, as the great black fellows shone glossy in the dappled shadows of the oak, and then took flight.

After breakfast I took a stroll through the piles of round, water-worn stones heaped up by the miners in days past, and now half overgrown by such verdure as flourishes in this semi-arid region—willows and alders by the stream, scrub oak, poison oak, manzanita (cousin, evidently, to our blueberry), blackberry vines, burnt-up grasses, and acres of gorgeous yellow lupine, some of it, fortunately, so far gone that I could gather the seed. As I walked there was an almost incessant little rustle and scurrying amid the sticks and leaves by my path, causing me at first to look warily for snakes, since it seemed excellent country for rattlers. But I soon discovered that a small, brownish-gray lizard, the length of your middle finger on an average, was the cause. He is known here as

the swift, and certainly justifies his name. Without apparent effort, running low like a mouse, he glides over a stone, under a stone, a foot up and then around a tree, with astonishing speed. On a tree or a dark stone, too, he is protectively colored. I attempted to pick up one which lay on a flat rock, and got my hand within an inch of him, when suddenly he was on a rock a full foot away, making the leap across what was for him a yawning chasm so quickly and with so little apparent effort that he merely seemed to be transferred by magic from one stone to the next. Again I attempted to touch him, and he went down the second stone and under a piece of wood. I sprang to the wood and lifted it. There was nothing beneath but sand! After a day and night in camp, I have come to know where to expect each rustle, along the paths a camper makes, amid both the rocks and dry woods. The swifts, evidently, are restricted in range, each choosing a tree or rock which is his particular refuge.

As I wandered through the stone piles, some larger object in motion presently caught my eye, and two hundred feet away, lumbering much like a woodchuck along a ridge of stones, went a fat badger. I might have attempted to pursue him, if almost my first step forward had not put up two

birds quite strange to me, seemingly from the very ground. They did not flush, but ran along a ledge of rock, the female with little clucking cries. About the size of large quail, they were colored more like slate pigeons, which indeed they rather resembled, except for noticeable crests and a much surer and trimmer action on the ground. I went at once to the spot whence they had emerged, and as I peeped over a little shelf of rock, out from a sandy dust bath below scattered four baby birds, mottled brown and white and flying strongly away into the bushes. These birds are what the Oregonians call valley quail, distinguishing them from the bob whites which inhabit the Willamette valley farther north, and from the so-called California quail. The young of the valley quail fly almost as soon as they are hatched, like our eastern ruffed grouse.

I saw no other unfamiliar bird in the stone piles, though my boyhood friend, the kingfisher, was sitting hopefully in a shrub overhanging the trout riffles. But when I returned to my tent, watching on the way the beautiful flight of a turkey buzzard which was patrolling the forest much as the aeroplanes farther north are patrolling the great reservations of fir, I found that the ravens had been up to some mischief or other and greatly offended a small flock of beautiful birds with extremely ugly

and insistent voices. The offended birds were squawking and chattering in the pines, and presently I got a good look at one, close to. He was a blue jay, but not at all like our eastern blue jay in color, though closely resembling him in size, shape, and noise-making proclivities. The Oregon jay is so deep a blue that he appears almost black in a pine tree, a very dark gun-metal, and it is only when he flies and the light catches on his wings that you would surely say he was blue. He has a fine, back-sloping, pointed crest, holds his head proudly, and is in every way a conspicuously handsome fellow. I saw no actual attack on the ravens, but there was much squawking and flying about and guttural repartee on both sides, till at length the ravens rose and swept away, leaving the jays to discuss the matter all the rest of the day.

In the afternoon, however, I did see a fight, and as picturesque a one as I was ever privileged to witness, staged high in the air over the middle of the gorge. Directly across the river from our camp, in a grove of pines, the crows were calling this morning, and from time to time I would see one dropping into the tree-tops. It may be a late nesting. At any rate, in mid-afternoon, while I was lying on my bed watching the branches above me, I heard a crow's excited battle note over the water,

and ran to a clear space on the bank to see what was going on. A small hawk, too high up and in too hard a light for identification without glasses, was circling over the water and the opposite pines, while a single crow, making four or five wing beats to every one made by the hawk, was flying over it. Every so often the crow would dart down at the hawk's head, but seldom quite striking it, and as it darted past it uttered its angry cry. The hawk was making no noise at all, but persisted in its steady circling, except when the crow got too close, or, perhaps, actually hit it. Then it in turn would dart down at the crow, now just below it, which would dash frantically lower, turn, and rise once more to its original strategic position overhead. The aërial evolutions were repeated over and over, and at first I could detect no method in the crow's attack. Gradually, however, as the birds wheeled and circled around, I could see that all the crow's dives were made from the same general direction, and that the hawk, sheering off a bit to avoid the possible blow, always had to sheer downstream. Conversely, when the crow, in its drop, went below the hawk, the latter, in its retaliatory attack, was worked still further west. At the end of fifteen minutes the battle was almost out of sight down the gorge, and not long after the crow came winging back, alone.

If I didn't know crows so well, I should attribute this apparent strategy to accident, but the crow, I feel sure, is entirely capable of such a campaign. Certainly no military aviator could have manœuvered his plane more skilfully and craftily to drive off a stronger enemy.

When I returned to my lazy couch in the shadows, I was soon roused by a familiar song—familiar and yet not familiar. It was the song of a bluebird, and yet it was not a bluebird, for every now and then the singer varied it as he had no business to, or ended it with a series of rather harsh, whistling notes. I rose and pursued him for some time through the scrub before at last I got a good look at him in a willow thicket. It was unmistakably a catbird, trim and long-tailed, but brownish, with white on the wings and with a raspberry-red breast like the bluebird it was mocking—on the whole, not as trim and striking a fellow as our gunmetal catbird of the East. But it was not long after that there darted swiftly and silently into my vision a strange bird which was a thing of arresting beauty. It was pursuing a white moth, which it caught on the wing, and then it perched on a limb close by, in full view, to eat its prey. A trim, well-built bird of medium size, not quite so large as a robin and much racier in type, it was a brilliant

primrose-yellow in color, with black wing-bars and a circle of Indian red around each eye, not clearly defined on the circumference, but shading off into the yellow. Its breast, too, was dyed with this same red. The bird, so tropical in its aspect, so vivid amid the dappled sunlight of the wood, remained close by for an hour or more, darting now and again after an insect, like a fly-catcher. To see this brilliant stranger for the first time was like one's first glimpse of a cardinal. When he finally left me, I hoped against hope that he would return. He was the so-called Louisiana or western tanager, first mentioned, I think, by Lewis and Clark.

He did not return, but I had the consolation of a message from home. My first intimation was that "thin, wiry *cheep*" which Thoreau speaks of, and then, right over my head, startlingly close, the full-throated, cheerful, ringing, *chickadee-dee-dee!* I whistled the mating call, but the birds (there were two) did not answer it. They hopped nearer, however, down the pine tree, until they were hardly ten feet overhead, and fluttered and cheeped in their curiosity for ten minutes or more. It was, indeed, a reminder of my own Berkshire hillside three thousand miles away.

The blow of an ax that broke my solitude turned out to be nothing more disturbing than a downy

woodpecker. A song sparrow sang in a clearing close by. Through the open woods several young robins were hopping, their breasts still speckled. A black-and-white warbler hopped on a limb over the tent, and at least two other varieties of warblers were visible, but not close enough for identification. I neither saw nor heard any thrushes. These woods are hardly cool enough for them. It is, I presume, the dry weather hereabouts which has driven so many birds down along the river. Back on the hills there is little water till you come to the Cascade range, and no doubt many of the insects, also, are drawn toward the stream. Even the rabbits are, for that matter. Before supper I went out along the road between the river-bank woods and the cañon hills, and there I met a large jack-rabbit coming toward me. He didn't see me, however, though I don't know how he could have helped it, till he was within fifty feet. Then he started, stared, looked intensely ashamed of his carelessness, turned tail and bounded back along the road a bit, then took one long, easy spring into the woods. Just where he had vanished into the woods I started, a moment later, three more jacks coming down as if to cross the road to the river. They scurried into the scrub, where I could glimpse them squatting, waiting for me to pass by.

Farther on, I turned down to the stream again, hearing the noise of water roaring, and discovered that the river poured over a ledge, making a low, irregular waterfall. The stream here was split by an island, and that portion of the river on my side was much the smaller, not much larger, in fact, than a good-sized brook, flowing rather in a series of broken rapids than over a fall. I pushed through the dense willow scrub at this point, to see what I could find, and quite as if Nature were conspiring this day to show me the best she had, my eye was attracted by a bird perched on a rock in midstream a little way above me. Grasping a willow branch, I leaned far forward to get a clear view, and watched, for it was the first chance I had ever enjoyed of observing a water ousel at work in a stream. It is a fascinating bird, not only because of its habits,—it nests in behind waterfalls, and its song is as liquid and lovely as the song of the brook, —but because of its trim little body, its pretty mouse-gray coloring, with a lighter patch on the breast, and its businesslike activity in the water. I say in the water advisedly. The bird I was watching made a pretense of standing on the stones in the stream, and pecking with his rather long bill into the moss upon them. But half the time his slender, snipe-like legs were submerged, and his bill and

whole head went under the rush of water as he pecked the moss below the surface, or seemed, even, to be snatching at something in the current. Every now and again the current would toss a wave against him and bowl him off his pins, sometimes completely submerging him, but, quite untroubled, he would emerge on a new perch lower down, give his wings two or three brisk flaps, scattering the spray, and resume his businesslike search for food. Not being web-footed, his easy control of himself in this rushing current was remarkable. By the time the stream had pushed him along to a point opposite me, I expected he would take fright and fly away, but he minded me no more than if I had been a tree, hopping once close to my feet, and then allowing himself to be carried on past, down to clear water. At the foot of the rapids he took the air, and, flying so low that he almost touched the top of the waves, he went quickly by me again, up-stream, and disappeared, perhaps to begin the operation all over again. Unfortunately, he was perfectly silent, so I could not renew acquaintance with his song, which I first heard on an unforget-table evening beside a stream that leaped down from a glacier on the Great Divide.

I returned to camp along the river shelf, partly on sand, partly on glacial and water-worn gravel

or lava ledges. Westward the river made a wide turn, so that I looked downstream to a high, wooded wall, hazy blue now with the long afternoon shadows. In the sunlight between me and this hazy backdrop everything over the river, for a mile, was thrown into relief. It was amazing to see the number of birds darting in this free space, searching for supper, not alone the bank swallows, but hosts of both smaller and larger birds. Back in camp the jays were squawking and squeaking, first two, then rapidly a dozen, in one pine tree, while a pair of small birds, which I couldn't get a good look at, were piping angrily and shrilly. Evidently they were offended at something the first pair of jays had done, and the squawks of these jays had brought the rest of the tribe. The racket lasted five minutes, and then as suddenly subsided, while out of the ensuing silence, above the gentle roar of the rapids and the rustle of the dry manzanita leaves stirred by a cool evening wind, came sweet and clear the vesper notes of a song sparrow, familiar and beloved. . . .

So, without fireworks or oratory, my Fourth of July by the Rogue River has ended. When the rest of the party returned, the coffee was boiling over the fire and I was tossing crumbs to a huge gray ground squirrel which had become—after con-

siderable coaxing—tame enough to approach the edge of the camp, grab a morsel, and dart away with it. They asked me if I hadn't been lonely, but I couldn't honestly say that I had.

THE BLUEST LAKE IN THE WORLD

IT was the evening of July fifth before we got word that the last blasts which would break the snow barrier across the Crater Lake road were to be fired the next morning, so we were up with the sun on the sixth, that we might get as early a start as possible. We had only seventy-five miles to go, but seventy-five miles in Oregon is not the same thing as the run from New York to Pawling. In those seventy-five miles we would have to ascend six thousand feet, and over a road which was already deep with pumice dust, and badly cross-rutted. We took our last plunge in the Rogue River, saw our last western tanager flashing like a bit of gold and copper in the trees, and said farewell to our "habitation enforced", having found it a far pleasanter spot than, in our first impatience at the delay, we had guessed it could be.

The day was excessively hot — hot all over the United States, we learned later. The second motor fell far behind the first, to avoid the choking dust,

but, even so, its occupants speedily became almost unrecognizable. At first the road led through a narrowing valley, where agricultural outposts of the plain below had ventured, and established cool, green oases of alfalfa beside the irrigation ditches. But as the valley narrowed still more, and the river rushed greener and louder, the sides began to go up steeply and to carry large timber, and finally we were in a true mountain gorge, with the highway climbing the side higher and higher above the brawling stream. Some day it will be a paved road, but it wasn't yet, and between the dust, the thank-you-marms, the narrow width and precipitous bank, which made a meeting with another vehicle a matter of prayer, and the steadily mounting red mercury in the radiator meter, our progress was slow. It was noon before we came to a settlement on the edge of a forest, where there were numerous summer camps and a filling station. From this settlement on for a dozen miles the road suddenly straightened out into a wide, arrow-like boulevard (dusty, to be sure) which crossed a level plateau through the heart of a superb stand of Douglas firs—a part of the Crater Lake national forest. There may be drivers who put on speed when they reach this point in the road, but I cannot conceive of such creatures. The trees are by no

means the largest you can see in the Northwest, but they are three and four feet through, they tower two hundred feet straight aloft over your head, and they grow massed thickly together, in a soil that can evidently meet the full demands of a virgin forest. Mile after mile you slide up the arrow-straight aisle of the highway, and mile after mile your eye goes off in endless perspective down the lanes of this gold-flecked, columnar temple. Once we stopped to let the engine cool, and I got out to examine a four-foot butt which had been sawed through cleanly and moved to one side, in making the road. (Enough fir timber was cut down constructing that strip of highway to build a village.) At the foot of the log-end was a pile of fresh sawdust six inches deep, which puzzled me, because the cut was evidently several years old. Examining it, I saw a weather crack half-way up, running horizontally across the butt, a crack into which you could insert a lead pencil. As I watched, to the edge of this crack, from the dark interior, came a large black ant, with a bit of fresh wood in its mouth. It stopped at the rim of the precipice, dropped the bit of wood over, and went back. Another appeared, and another, and another. All along the crack heads kept appearing, each with its bit of fresh sawdust. Now and then, for some curious reason I

could not determine, one of the ants would walk out over the rim and down the precipice an inch or more, before dropping his load. Why he went to this extra exertion, I could not see. I rapped the great log sharply, and several ants rushed to the edge of the crack, in alarm, looking out, and even climbing a way up and down the butt end. But they all went back. Not an ant was visible on the ground, or coming up or down the butt to this cave dwelling. They were all evidently hard at work inside, making the home. As the log was four feet thick, and about forty feet long, and, in that dry climate, with its natural weather-resisting qualities, would last for years and years, the analogy of this ant dwelling to one of the cliff dwellings of the Southwest was not at all fanciful. The chamber that was being hollowed inside could only be reached by the one narrow crack, more than two feet above the ground, on the smooth-sawed butt end. Nothing except another insect could get into it, and it could be easily defended at the opening. Even an ardent scientist would have hesitated, on a hot day, before he started chopping into that log to expose the interior.

Scarcely a mile beyond this point we came, quite suddenly, upon a clear, brown creek flowing rapidly under the road and into the forest, the first water

encountered for many miles. Just off the highway, and beside this creek, in a beautiful grove of tall, stately, overarching firs, the Forest Service has established a camp site. The ground has been cleared of undergrowth, sanitary facilities erected, a garbage-disposal pit dug, and neat signs placed here and there to instruct such campers as need them (and, alas! many do) in the proper use of fire and in camp cleanliness. We stopped here for lunch, finding four or five cars ahead of us, with tents already pitched for a stay of a day or two. The contrast between this beautiful and convenient camp site, so carefully planned for the use of the touring public, and the reception one would meet almost anywhere in the East in his efforts to camp for the night beside the road, was one of those things which strike you anew every time you travel in the West, especially if you enter the national forests. New York State, to be sure, is already waking up to the fact that the automobile is here to stay, and that in thousands of cases it can get whole families out into the country who cannot afford to put up at hotels. The provision of camp sites, on the public domains, is almost as much a useful duty of the state as the construction of the highways. But most eastern states are lagging far behind the West in this respect, and behind the

Federal Forest Service, in spite of the niggardly funds Congress doles out to it to work with. It ought to be possible to run from New York, let us say, to the White Mountains and find camp sites in state forest reservations all along the route. Perhaps, some day, it will be—but never, alas! will those camps be canopied by Douglas firs!

The thermometer, which we had placed in the shade while we ate, registered 86 when, at two o'clock, we resumed our journey. The cars were soon overheated again, and we toiled slowly up the increasing grade, past the entrance gate to Crater Lake National Park, still through forested country, with little or no indication of mountains. Then quite suddenly, at a turn of the road, we glimpsed through an opening a snow-clad pinnacle ahead. Farther on we came to rushing water again, where Anna Creek store and post-office sit at the junction of the Medford road and the other entrance road in from Lake Klamath, to the southeast. Here we were told that cars were being sent up and down on a schedule, as it was impossible to pass. We were still within the up-traffic hour, so we kept on, by a steep grade, through forests and lush green creek bottoms, and soon through banks of snow. The road grew muddy, the drifts wandered away through the green trees, and at Government Camp,

a mile below the rim of the lake, we actually felt their chill. From here on we needed chains. Again and again, on the steep grade, the road was but a muddy ditch between two walls of snow as high as the car, snow still blackened with the powder used to blast it out. The trees grew fewer, the undergrowth sparser below them, till at last the ground, where it showed at all, was like bare gray ash, so recently had the snow melted. We ran at length through a long snow ditch, on a level stretch, seeing ahead of us a circle of snow-draped volcanic rocks, an hotel, and what looked like a gray sand-bar between us and the invisible ocean. Behind us the ravine up which we had climbed dropped back into a dark green hole of forest.

Stopping the car beside the hotel, we still could see no lake, for in front of us was that rise of gray ash, like a sand-bar, cutting between us and the sky. Springing out over the doors and laden running-boards, we dashed up this slope—and stopped abruptly.

Directly under our feet the earth fell away in a vast slide of rock and volcanic ash, at an angle of at least fifty degrees. It fell away for eleven hundred feet, and if you once started down that incline, you would keep on to the bottom. It fell away into a huge hole, and as we looked to right and left, and

then across, we saw this hole as an almost perfect circle, six miles in diameter. At the bottom of the hole lay Crater Lake, with the evening stillness coming on it, so that it held in reflection all the slides and snowdrifts and white-capped lava pinnacles that ring it round, held them reflected in a mirror of inconceivable blue. You have seen water blue as the sky, but this is not sky-blue, it is much deeper and richer. It is not Mediterranean nor Caribbean blue. It is a strange, opalescent indigo, with a penumbra of green around the margin where there are shallows. It is opalescent indigo—and yet that does not describe it, for it is capable of many variations and mystic changes, dusky moods of Prussian grayness, richer moments, under a wild sunset, of solemn purple; yet always, somehow, itself, its own incomparable and indescribable color.

As I stood on the rim, with that wild, tremendous and yet exquisite prospect smiting my every sense, my mind went first, I think, back to the prospector who, three quarters of a century ago, wandered up these slopes from the river gorge below, and first, of all white men, suddenly beheld this miracle. There was no hotel beside him, no road behind him. He and his horse stood together, alone in the upheaved wilderness, and looked for the first time on the most beautiful lake in America. Had he not,

after all, found something more precious than gold?

But our reflections were cut short by the camp leader's orders. The hour was late. We had still to find a camping site, to pitch our tents, to gather wood and water. Just back from the rim the timber comes up the outer slope of the mountain, leaving a sort of pumice beach between itself and the sharp, sudden drop to the lake. In this timber the government permits all to camp who wish. But now the road along the rim was blocked with snow, and the woods, too, were full of drifts. With the aid of a shovel we ploughed the cars through a few drifts till we reached a place where we could carry the tents across a stretch of snow to a group of firs where the ground was bare. Here we strung our tents and made our fire, after considerable search for dead wood that had been uncovered long enough to dry out. Around us, wherever there was open ground, green things were peeping through, and some spots were already carpeted with a low, pink phlox (*phlox diffusa*), much like our *phlox subulata* used in eastern rock gardens, though a shade less bright in color. Already, as the sun set, the air was chilling, and we dug out long-unused sweaters, and remade our pneumatic sleeping bags with extra blankets. The radiators of the cars, too,

had to be drained, which seemed a foolish precaution when we thought of the temperature we had been through but a few short hours since. Yet with the coming of starlight the snow perceptibly stiffened up, and we finally crawled shivering into our bags, with a cold night wind tugging at the tents and working in under the flaps. The man who invented the sleeping bag, in which you are wrapped impervious to wind, and who added the blessing of a soft pneumatic mattress beneath you, which can be inflated even on a stone to give you perfect rest, should surely be entitled to enjoy the most comfortable corner of Paradise unto the end of time!

When I rose in the morning the water in our pail was like ice, and as I went out into the first level rays of the sun that were shooting from over the snow-capped battlement of Garfield Peak, and started across the drift which lay between me and the rim, my boots squeaked on the frozen snow, and scarcely left a print. At the camp water-tap (the government has to pump the water up from a spring down in the woods, for there is no water on the rim), there was half an inch of ice on a little pool beneath the spigot. The night wind had died completely away, and the day's heat, as yet, had caused no new disturbance. The blue lake far be-

The Author's Camp at Crater Lake

low me, quick to ruffle into a nasty chop and quick to settle into calm, was now as still as that "glassy sea" upon which the cherubim and seraphim cast down their golden crowns, for reasons that I used to speculate on in vain when, as a child in church, I read the hymnal as a lesser evil than listening to the sermon. The westward walls of the crater were warm with the sun, and their smooth inclines of snow or pumice, and their precipitous snow-capped peaks, especially the great dome of solid lava called Llao Rock, were as clear cut in the water as above it. Remembering Emerson's argument for idealism, to look at a familiar landscape through your legs, and encouraged by the fact that at this early hour I was alone on the rim, I stooped over and looked at Crater Lake between my legs. But here the argument for idealism did not work, for the landscape upside down was the same as right side up, save for the fact that the reversed sky was a deeper blue.

The elevation of the rim where I stood, which is a fair average for the entire rim, is slightly over seven thousand feet. At one point on the east it sinks to within five hundred feet of the water, and at several points around the circumference lava peaks stand up over eight thousand feet, but it is fair to call seven thousand the average elevation of

what is left of the huge volcano, posthumously christened Mount Mazama. From its diameter at this level, and from the angle at which the outer slopes rise, as well as from the similar size of Mount Shasta, geologists calculate that the original mountain was between fourteen and sixteen thousand feet high. Some terrific eruption, one of those which deposited the volcanic soil over the Northwest, hollowed this cone out to a mere shell, cracks and vents were made at near the present level of the rim, and the whole upper portion of the mountain collapsed into the crater, leaving a vast and seething hole. Later another eruption started to build the mountain anew, from the bottom of the caldera, and succeeded in pushing up a little cone eight hundred feet above the present water level, which now appears as an island, like a pile of cinders partially covered with trees. Wizard Island, as this cone within a crater is called, was evidently the last major effort of the mountain. It cooled into a tremendous caldera, or bowl, with a jagged rim, and four thousand feet deep, measured from the highest point on the rim to the deepest point on the bottom. And this huge vessel, fed only by the snows and rains which fell through the ages on its floor and the steep inner sides, gradually filled halfway up with water, making the Crater Lake of to-

day, which, over a goodly portion of its area, is two thousand feet deep. What gave this water its magic blue I cannot say. Various theories have been put forward to account for it. I am content to accept the fact, and let who will theorize. At any rate, in a setting of unique geological interest, it is the blue jewel of the world's lakes.

Yet, like any other spot on the earth's surface, of course, you cannot know it at a glance, nor appreciate it in a day, in a single mood. Unfortunately, however, a day is as long as many tourists remain. They come to the rim, they look at the lake, perhaps if the snow has melted they drive around the rim road which the government has constructed,—a forty-mile run,—they dance that evening in the hotel, and the next morning they depart! There being little but the lake to see, they think they have seen it. But they have not. They have no more seen it than you would have seen the beloved fields around your home if you came to them a stranger and departed with the sun. To see it you must descend to the water, you must row out over it, you must drift around the shore under those two-thousand-foot towering cliffs, you must climb to the top of one of those rim pinnacles, too, in order to grasp the fact that you are actually on the spine of the Cascade range, and that this lake is in a mountain:

you must explore the forests and search out the wild flowers; above all, you must come to feel that blue jewel as a living presence, to greet it in the morning, to watch its sunset moods, its starlit mystery, its moonlight magic. To do all that, you must stay by it a week, at the least, and preferably in your own camp, as far away from the hotel and the centre of camp life as you can bring yourself to carry water. The one objection to camping is the fact that so many Californians will be camped near you, ready on any pretext, or on none at all, to waylay you and talk about the climate of California. Asking them why they came to Oregon does no good at all. They are impervious to any irony less pointed than a hard push which precipitates them over the rim to the lake a thousand feet below—and, of course, one hesitates to resort to such extreme measures, great as the provocation is.

There is but one trail down to the water, and without a trail the descent is extremely difficult and dangerous, however carefully you choose your spot. On our first day at the lake, this one trail was still snow-blocked, but the boatmen and one or two fishermen had been down and got a few boats out, and, being possessed of Alpine stocks and a rope, we saw no reason to wait. But even as we started down, the government gang appeared, armed with

shovels, and began on the trail. When we were two or three hundred feet below them, we had to work down through a sharp ravine, like a bottle neck, into which the concavity of the drift was drawing all the lumps of snow tossed out by the trail breakers above. As they saw us approaching this chute, they redoubled their efforts, and rained upon us a veritable barrage of snow-cakes, which attained tremendous velocity long before they reached us. Some of them were large and solid enough to knock your feet out from under you, or give you a staggering blow on the head, and we clung to our rope as we passed through that bombardment with more tenacity than on many a steeper slope, later in the higher mountains.

But we gained something more than excitement by this descent. Tremendousness is measured by a mote, and a precipice is only appreciated by a climber. It means little, when you stand on the rim of Crater Lake, to be told that the water is eleven hundred feet beneath you, because it does not look that far, in the clear mountain atmosphere, and even the two-thousand-foot cliff of Llao Rock does not greatly impress you at a glance. But once you have descended those eleven hundred feet with danger and effort, even once you have walked down and up the mile of steep trail, you have a new

San Jose

conception of the depth. Still more do you have it when in a boat at last you float out on the bottomless blue water, suspended in some strange blue medium between an inverted world and an upright, and see the naked sweeps of pumice, the vast debris slopes of broken conglomerate, the gray and pink and brown cliffs of lava rock, shoot one thousand, two thousand feet right above your head, to meet the snow. It is then, at last, that you realize the majesty as well as the beauty of Crater Lake.

That first day we rowed across to Wizard Island, landed on one of the great black blocks of lava which form its base, and toiled up the steep trail which winds the eight hundred feet to the top. Above the base it is apparently entirely composed of volcanic cinder, and you would pick it as the most unlikely of places for vegetation. Yet it supports a forest of considerable size, and wild flowers in gay profusion, especially Indian paintbrush and a peculiarly bright-hued, attractive, low pentstemon (*pentstemon Davidsonii*, I think), which would be a boon to any rock gardener if he could grow it. I am suspicious, however, of all these Cascade Alpines for eastern gardens. They are adapted to a climate that gives them little moisture in summer, and to a soil that is almost exclusively volcanic.

Crater Lake after an Early Snowfall. Wizard Island Crater in Centre

The summit of Wizard Island was a delightful spot. It contained a perfect little circular crater, almost one hundred feet deep, partially filled on one side by a huge snowdrift down which we skiied on our boot soles at a tremendous speed. The circular rim was studded with dwarfed evergreens which gave us shade, and sitting beneath them to eat our lunch we looked out on all sides at the lake, and then at the ring of higher walls that laid their pointed Alpine firs and hemlocks, their lava crags and drifts of snow, against the sky. Almost as on the water itself, we seemed suspended between two blue worlds, of sky and water.

Descending, we took to our boats again, and drifted around in the shallows along the shore of the island, with spinners astern for trout. I am told that this is an unsportsmanlike way to fish for trout, but not being a fisherman I cannot say just why. The true sport, I presume, shows his superior cleverness by so casting a fly that it deceives the fish. However, it seems to me but a matter of degree. He has to be cleverer at deception, and he has to use a smaller hook, so that the fish can resist longer, give him more "fight." The real sport, it seems to me, would be the man who dove overboard and caught the fish by outswimming him. But doubtless I am talking nonsense. I hasten to say

that, in our unsportsmanlike manner, we caught six large trout, weighing three or more pounds apiece, of a variety I shall not try to name, because no two "experts" at the hotel could agree on the subject. It is said that the lake was entirely devoid of fish when discovered, and eastern brook trout were used to stock it. If that is true, these brook trout have undergone a strange transformation on their new diet and in their new environment. But perhaps that is possible. At any rate, we took our six up the trail, now shoveled out so that we switchbacked across the drifts we had slid down in the morning, and placing part of them in the natural ice-box by our tent door,—a snowdrift,—we cooked the rest for dinner. The meat was salmon-red, but firm and delicious, and the coffee that night, and the fried potatoes, and the bread and jam, and the saucers of sliced pineapple, and the quiet cigars in the twilight, were like a benediction on the arduous day. It is actually true that no coffee is ever so good as camp coffee, boiled in a smoky old kettle over the fire, with clear spring water; and it seems true always, at the time, that no food is so good as that which waits you on the camp table, after a hard day in the open. William James used to say that a cup of coffee at the right moment could alter a man's whole philosophy of

life—an argument, of course, against the dual theory of mind and body. The camp mess is another argument. Digestion waits on appetite; yea, though for a year you have been on the strictest of diets, and fried foods are poison to you, you will come in after twenty miles in the saddle and eat fried dish after fried dish, only to feel stealing over you a vast content with the universe, a vast sense of peace and well being, a vast appreciation of space and silence, and an equal contempt for worry and fret and the insect cares that annoyed you back there in the moil of cities. . . .

Another day we climbed Garfield Peak—a simple enough matter, to be sure, for the peak is just east of the hotel and rises but a thousand feet above the level of the rim. Few climbs of a thousand feet, however, so well repay the effort. At first the trail led us along a shelf of broken volcanic soil and rock, which was rich with wild flowers, a true Alpine garden. Among the number I particularly noted a prostrate shrub which I coveted. You would hardly have detected it as a cousin of Jersey tea, yet it was the *ceanothus prostratus,* popularly called mahala mats. Here the prostrate foliage grew thick and stiff, quite like a little mat, indeed, and above it peeped the pretty little lavender-blue flower heads. It was growing close to the path,

amid low, broken rocks, and in such a situation it supplies not only bloom and cover, but a certain wiry sturdiness that is captivating. Not far beyond the station of this plant we came to a long, steep slope of broken lava fragments which slid away for five hundred feet, into the forest below, as if some gigantic dump cart had emptied a load of crushed stone off the trail. A more desolately naked and unpromising spot for wild flowers could hardly be imagined; yet here, of all places, down the whole length of this dump, and for the hundred or more feet of its breadth, were our friends, the chalice cups! We had seen none before, and instantly the picture sprang to our memories of Grinnell Meadows in Glacier Park, where they grew in the lush, damp grass, with the lake beside them. Here they had no moisture except what had been supplied by the snow which but recently had melted off. A few more days, and that would be absorbed in the broken soil. Indeed, no real soil was evident. The flowers appeared to be growing in a rock heap. We sprang off the trail, and scrambled down the slope, the broken lava slipping and sliding under foot and threatening to start a landslide at any moment. There were hundreds, thousands, of the glorious anemones, some in full bloom, some in bud, some but just forcing their foliage up. And there

was absolutely no other vegetation on this section of slope! Some might come later, to be sure, when the drift had been longer gone, but as yet there was no sign of it. The anemones had the lava heap quite to themselves, with a proud exclusiveness that befits their beauty. To right and left, where the broken lava met the softer pumice, was a visible dead line which they did not cross. We had found none below this point, and we found none above it. I purposely went all the way down the rock drift and searched the ravine at the bottom to see if some had not sown themselves there, but none could I find. They had selected the one spot, and held to it.

Half-way up the peak the path skirts the edge of the precipice above the lake known as Eagle Crags, and here it is well to pause, fifteen hundred feet directly above the blue depths of the lake, because from that perch you may perhaps see, as we did, a great raven go sailing out from the cliff, his head and wings cut sharp against the blue beneath, and the sunlight, striking down upon him, turning his glossy black feathers to the iridescent colors you sometimes see on a shining lump of coal. A great black raven soaring over the hole of Crater Lake is a noble spectacle, and there is nothing melancholy about him. Indeed, his raucous cry has rather a

merry ring to it, and is a welcome sound in the vast silence of lava crags and space.

From this point on we had no trail, for the snow lay deep. However, it was also soft and gave easy footing. The man with the motion-picture camera, which he had brought up on his back, paused on a shelf below the peaked summit, and told us to go on up to the top, and then walk along the extreme edge, so he could photograph us against the sky. Now it so happened that the extreme edge, whereon we were directed to walk, was a snow cornice, projecting over a precipice a hundred feet high. Standing below, the camera man assured us this cornice would "hold an elephant." Standing above, we asked for the elephant, to make the trial. At last we compromised by walking within five feet of the "extreme edge," which enabled him to get us down to the knees. After that, we had attention to give to the view.

Here, at last, on the peak of Garfield, you realize the true situation of Crater Lake, as a part of the Cascade range. To the east we looked almost directly down into the far-stretching level desert of eastern Oregon, lying out bluer and bluer like the sea. Southward we looked along the flank of the range itself, over holes of forest and peaks of snow, past the great, dazzling-white pyramid of Mount

The Phantom Ship Seen from Garfield Peak, Crater Lake
Mt. Scott in Background

McLaughlin, until far away, so far it hung like a faint white cloud on the horizon, was the mystic bulk of Shasta. Westward the eye traveled over broken, wooded summits, like waves of the sea, and you knew that somewhere beyond them lay the Pacific. To the north, in the hole at our feet lay the lake, the peaks around it like summits in the range, and beyond them and it the needle point of Mount Thielsen, and then, farther on, the white pyramid of Diamond Peak showed how the Cascades march northward. The lake is a blue jewel set deep, but set high up in the mountain spine. . . .

Another day, and we sailed above down-plunging precipices to the Phantom Ship—and that was the best of all. The day that followed I took my notebook deep into the woods down the outer slope behind the camp, where I had no companions but an inquisitive badger, once the shy, frightened glance of a black-tailed deer which shot hastily away, and a pair of camp robbers who, with their uncanny sense, sighted food and perched their beautiful plump bodies in the limbs directly over my head, and tried to get up courage to snatch the sandwich from my hand. There I wrestled feebly and with profound vexation at the stubborn thing called language, to set down the memories of the day before. I have tried it again, with the event

more distant. Poetry, said Wordsworth, is emotion remembered in tranquillity. But the result is not more satisfactory, so, for better or worse, I shall transcribe from my notebook:

The Garden of the Phantom Ship

I have discovered the most beautiful garden in the world,—at least, today I think so, for I am still under its spell. It is a rock garden, too, and if any one had told me a week ago that I would give the prize for beauty to a rock garden I should have laughed in his face. But yesterday I spent six glorious hours on the garden of the Phantom Ship, and I am converted—converted, that is, to Nature's design. More than ever, though, I would turn from the artificial rock garden as the most futile of horticultural goals. To see the garden of the Phantom Ship is to learn the folly of false rock piles, and to turn anew to the quieter ways of phlox-bordered paths or violets and bloodroot underneath the trees. Somewhere in England there is a "reproduction" of the Matterhorn, forty or fifty feet high, and covering an acre. Upon it are planted thousands of Alpine flowers. It probably cost a fortune—and it is absurd. It is an horticultural satire on man and his pompous insignificance. The true rock garden

is " the rose of beauty on the brow of chaos "—and the chaos is quite as essential as the rose.

We went swiftly down the trail from the rim to the water, finding the lake placid on a cloudless day, loaded our boats, and pushed out, rowing eastward under the precipitous and jagged wall of Eagle Crags, which rose two thousand feet above us, a wall of sombre grays and browns, of warmer reds, and touched with green where the hardy Alpine firs found a foothold, or with white where a snowdrift hung. The reflection plunged down two thousand feet beneath us, into the bottomless blue of the lake, and we, in our cockleshells, floated, as it were, midway up a four-thousand-foot precipice. When you get down on the surface of Crater Lake you discover, too, that it is not the almost flawless circle it seems from above, for the shore line is broken by bays and headlands, adding to its wild impressiveness. We followed this broken shore line for an hour, rowing steadily toward a small rock fragment which could be seen at the base of Dutton Cliff, seemingly but a half-mile away.

At last we drew near it, and it separated itself from the base of the cliff, disclosing a gap of open water. Small, did I say? It was a jagged slab of lava, perhaps two hundred feet long, up-ended in the lake with its top broken into three tall spires,

rising more than one hundred and fifty feet from the surface of the lake. And suddenly we knew it for what it is, a ship of lava forever setting sail from its moorings at the base of Dutton Cliff, pointing its bow across the blue toward the sunset. They call it the Phantom Ship because from a distance it is often impossible to discern it, so cunningly does it melt into the two-thousand-foot precipice behind. The Phantom Ship! You wonder at the miracle, for it is not often the fate of such natural objects in the public domain to be christened with imagination.

We shipped our oars as we slid nearer this proud ship of rock, that not even their drip should break the reflection—and suddenly, looking into the water, a new and for the moment an overmastering wonder of Crater Lake was disclosed. We saw no bottom at all, gazing down merely into an opaque blue mass; then, in the space of a boat's length, the bottom was plain beneath us, how far down we could not say, but probably fifty feet. Quietly manœuvering the boats around, and taking advantage of their shadows, we drifted back again, watching intently. Yes, there was the bottom, almost level, below us—an under-water shelf or base of the Phantom Ship. And, without any warning, as suddenly as the wall of a house drops from the

gutters, the shelf vanished down into the bottomless depths. We were sailing over the rim of a tremendous precipice. My head is as steady as most men's, and I have never yet suffered any dizziness on the most precipitous of climbs, yet I confess that here, as the boat drifted over that rim and the bottom below us mysteriously vanished into the very hollows of the earth, my imagination was stronger than my nerves, and I had a moment of sharp reaction, sitting back faint in the skiff. There are people who, once experiencing this sensation on Crater Lake, will not go out on it again, though to us, at least, after the first shock, the sensation was one of profound fascination, and we rowed back and forth over the under-water precipice rim, dropping bright coins on the visible ledge, which we could watch descend and see plainly as they lay on the bottom, far below us.

With our eyes focussed through the water, we had not yet noticed the reflection of the Phantom Ship, which presented its precipitous south broadside to us. But presently we looked upon the water, not through it; and on a surface faintly agitated by our boats and a vagrant, wandering air, a surface of exquisite blue, we were aware of the towering brown outline of the ship, floating softly as if conscious of its loveliness—of its towering brown walls

and masts, and then of curious spots of orange-red, a hot, vivid orange-red on the vivid blue water of Crater Lake, a daring color combination, surely! Our eyes rose now from the water, to see the source of these spots, on the ship's side itself—plant after plant of the flaming Indian paintbrush, growing apparently out of the very rock, and burning with an intensity of color I have not seen equaled elsewhere in the western mountains, this plant being peculiarly variable in coloration under different environmental conditions.

Then we rowed in close, found a single landing place on the southern wall of the ship, and began our exploration, for even out on the water it was apparent that the paintbrush was not alone in this up-ended garden. Actually outnumbering the paintbrush plants, and on a closer view quite as conspicuous, were fine, sturdy clumps of the low, spreading pentstemon, previously found on Wizard Island and on the rim. They seized upon little flat ledges, sometimes gayly crowning a sharp peak of lava, and they clung even in vertical cracks, streaming gracefully down the face of the cliff, all of them in full and luxuriant bloom without a particle of visible soil or moisture for their roots. Perhaps thirty feet above the water line the side of the ship slopes steeply back a little, before the leap of the

The Phantom Ship, Crater Lake

masts, and on this shelf cling a few sturdy but storm-dwarfed pines; and in patches of broken-down rock, like a fine sand, grow several clumps of a striking stonecrop, with copper-colored stems, copper-colored edges to the thick, bladder-like leaves, and bright copper-colored centres to the brilliant cream-yellow flowers. On the rocks, too, are a few sparse grasses, a fern or two, and down at the water's edge a willow shrub.

This was all the variety of verdure on the southern face of the Phantom Ship, and of course, in relation to that great, upright wall and the leaping masts of lava, it was little enough. A gardener would consider the display quite inadequate. Yet actually the exquisite restraint of it, on that sheer lava precipice carved like the side of a great, proud ship, or like the dream battlements of King Arthur's palace, rising above the bottomless blue of Crater Lake, and under the very shadow of Dutton Cliff, is its crowning charm. They are such brave little flowers, so hardy, so gay, clinging there amid wild tremendousness, as if Nature were asserting with one easy gesture her power to collapse and carve the very globe and not forget what is exquisite!

And as if further to remind us of this power of hers, which is the secret of her magic, the bird life of the Phantom Ship, invisible from afar, was dis-

closed to us as we explored, entranced, the southern rock face—disclosed by a buzzing hum over our heads. Looking up, incredulous, we saw not one humming-bird, but no less than a score, hovering over the pentstemon and paintbrush, their tiny wings beating to a blur as they hung suspended against the face of the cliff, or carrying them with darting flight from rock to rock. One expects to see nothing less than a bald eagle on the crags of Crater Lake—and here, in the very heart of the frozen upheaval, were the darting wings of humming-birds, the thrust of dainty bills into the honey drop of a flower!

Rowing presently around the bow of the lava liner, we found the northern side a shade less precipitous, with a landing place where we could make fast the boats, and above our heads a considerable stand of sturdy little pines, clinging like a green stunsail to the ledges. From this landing we could scramble up to the spine of the rock, or the hurricane deck, and even work down on the other side to examine and photograph the sedums. The secret of fertility in the Northwest, of course, is the volcanic origin of the soil, and here on the Phantom Ship, where there is nothing but lava blocks and pumice, the rapid breakdown of the conglomerate into dust makes something which can support plant

life where life would seem to be impossible. Some of the pines, growing apparently out of solid rock, have attained a diameter of eight inches or more, and dress the cliff side like whipped green sails. On the northern face, too, we found a tiny slope carpeted with a gay yellow flower rising a few inches from a bunch of pungent light-green leaves which smelled like tansy when crushed. This little flower, evidently an arnica, closely resembles a dwarf sunflower, and is about the size of a silver dollar. It would be a valuable addition to dry, rocky spots on estates in the Northwest, though probably it would not thrive elsewhere. Here, too, we found a shrub much like our eastern wild currant, but with dwarfed habits, naturally, and white blossoms; also several bushes of the service berry, only now, in July, in flower, though its eastern relative, the shadbush, whitens the swamps in earliest spring. There were a few more small and inconspicuous flowers also in bloom at this time, not found on the steeper southern face. On the whole, however, the hot orange-red Indian paintbrush, the pretty clumps of purple pentstemon, and the gay groups of sedum, adorning the brown and gray ledges and pinnacles of naked lava, were the flowers Nature had chosen to deck her ship for the launching.

The largest and tallest mast of the Phantom

Ship can be climbed. But I hardly recommend that climb to any but experienced rock scalers. It is a charm of this garden that so much of it is inaccessible! With the exercise of proper care that what you grasp with your hands does not give way, you can get within forty feet of the peak of the most easterly pinnacle, or rear mast, without great difficulty. We took a motion-picture camera that far. But the last forty feet are a different matter. They are only climbable because the pinnacle has split apart, making a clean cleft about twenty inches wide. Into this chimney you insert yourself. Then, if your shoes are properly shod with spikes, or, better, with hemp, you can work upwards by pushing your back against one rock while bracing your hands on the other, and lifting your feet. After your feet are set, you brace with the push of your legs and get your hands a little higher, at the same time hitching up your shoulders. By this method it is possible to scale the forty feet of the chimney in an hour or so, that is, if your muscles hold out that long. You can descend in a few seconds on a doubled rope, or even more rapidly if your grip gives way. The view from the pinnacle has little to recommend it over that from the base, but of course one doesn't climb rock chimneys for the view. In fact, it has never been satisfactorily

determined why one climbs them. One simply does it—or he doesn't. And if he doesn't, he cannot possibly understand the man who does, especially as the man who does cannot possibly tell him. Fred Kiser declares that the urge to climb is accidental in its origin, and results from the combination of a strong back with a weak mind. I have often wished my back were stronger.

We ate our lunch on the deck of the ship, between two masts, and a twisted little pine flung out an arm above us to frame the view out across six miles of blue water to the down-dropping crater walls. At our feet were gay and dainty flowers, above our heads were lava pinnacles. The sun was settling toward that western rim when we pushed off at last, and looking back saw the reflection of the ship dancing on the ripples of our wake, its spots of orange and purple color flashing like opal lights on the crest of a tiny wave. Behind it towered the naked slopes and frowning crags of Dutton Cliff. The ship itself was no pygmy thing, with its one hundred and sixty-five feet of up-ended lava pinnacles. And under the boat there again was the bottom falling away into the bowels of the earth! Yet, dancing lightly on the blue water were the reflections of flowers, and up against the rocks, in the sunlight, was the flash of a humming-bird's

wing—the soft whisper of a dainty charm above the roar of earth's upheaval!

With the memory of that day, brought back to me so vividly by these pages from my notebook (for to one's own memory the poor shorthand of his language is sufficient), I would say farewell to Crater Lake. But our farewell to the garden of the Phantom Ship was hardly over before we were crying hail to the garden of Minto Pasture, and we were camping beyond the last Californian, not in a lotus land, to be sure, but a land of larkspur, which is quite as satisfactory.

V

Mount Jefferson

FROM BEND TO MINTO PASTURE

ROM Crater Lake to the little city of Bend, or town, as we in the East would call it, is a long day's run in a motor, long and excessively dry and dusty, over a road which discourages all attempts at speed. Leaving the National Park by the eastern entrance, we ran southeasterly and then north, over the level " desert " of eastern Oregon, but not far enough away from the range to be out of timber. Practically the entire journey to Bend, which is about half-way up the state, lies at present through a forest, sometimes of jack pine, in dense, ugly stands (the jack pine is one of the few trees, I think, which can be called unreservedly ugly), and sometimes of yellow pine. There are but two towns on the entire stretch of one hundred and seventy-five miles, and you are easily able to pass through either one without seeing it unless you are watchful. The yellow-pine forests alone give interest to the journey, and that is sometimes a sad interest, when you run into a section

where the lumbermen have preceded you, or are at work.

The yellow pine (*pinus ponderosa*) is the tree which furnishes a lumber sometimes sold in the East as western white pine, sometimes more honestly called western soft pine, for the true white pine is much superior. It grows, apparently, only on the arid eastern side of the ranges, subsisting and making truly splendid stands on an annual precipitation of but nine inches. Its distinctive appearance marks it out from every other pine, and should long ago have made it celebrated, one would suppose. Yet it is the least known of our major forest trees. In the old stands the trees attain about the girth of virgin eastern white pines (alas, few of my readers have ever seen, probably, a stand of virgin white pines!), though occasionally reaching a diameter of six feet; but on the whole the stands are lower; certainly there is perceptibly less clear wood before the branches. It is the bark which makes these trees distinctive, a coppery-red bark laid on in large, even, flat scales, the long diameter vertical, joined neatly together and fitting the trunk snugly. The effect is one of almost metallic neatness, trimness, and polish. The soil is too dry to support a dense stand, so the trees, strikingly uniform in size, are spaced well apart, with little or no undergrowth,

the gray-brown volcanic ash often showing like a carpet. Consequently a great deal of sunlight strikes through, shining gayly on the copper-bright trunks and lighting up the whole clean, park-like forest till the eye can travel long distances through it. It is not a forest of mystery, but it is one of pleasant oddity and almost bizarre charm.

We were struck, however, with one curious fact. There seemed to be no young forest coming up, and in so open a wood the shade ought rather to have encouraged seedlings than discouraged them. Presently we ran into a section of national forest, and lo! the forest floor was alive with seedlings, growing in such dense stands in some of the open spaces that you could hardly have crowded through. The explanation became simple—in a word, fire protection! In a land of so little rain a fire starts easily and spreads rapidly over a forest floor which is at all littered. Burning through dead grass and shrubs and needles, it can sweep out all seedlings, leaving only the major trees. And how many fires have swept through the Oregon forests, no man can count. After a time we ran into one—into a land of wild desolation, first, where the lumbermen had been, taking every tree, leaving literally not one seed-bearer to the hundred acres, but leaving all over the ground heaps of dry and brittle slash;

and then into the smoke of the fire itself, where we saw the flames eating through the slash, licking up abandoned logs, scorching out the humus, and killing every seedling in their path. Needless to say, this was not in the national forest. It was in one of those forests owned by the powerful, intelligent men, the "master minds" who "develop the country's resources."

Before we reached Bend we came upon their railroad and their huge lumber camp. On the edge of Bend we saw their gigantic sawmill, built at a cost of $3,000,000, with a mechanical ingenuity that makes you gasp as the huge machinery takes logs from the water and dumps them out on a platform half a mile away as boards and boxes. Yet, with all our ingenuity to devise machines, we as a nation have not yet the intelligence to devise a way to save our forests from the unrestrained greed of the few; we have not yet learned that developing our resources is quite a different thing from depleting them; we have not yet had sense enough to compel a man or a corporation which can afford to build a $3,000,000 sawmill, at least to leave one seed-bearing tree to the acre and keep out fire. We have stripped our forests in the East, and now we are stripping them even faster in the West. We are not nearly so smart as we think we are.

Amid these melancholy reflections we rolled into the town of Bend, and deserted our skyline camps temporarily for a hotel bed and a bath. They were good beds, for in this little city we found an extraordinary hotel, but I cannot say they were any better than our pneumatic sleeping bags. A bath, however, after one hundred and seventy-five miles of Oregon dust, is another matter. And so were the fresh raspberries on the dinner table, and the cream from a cow.

For various reasons we remained several days in Bend, and I became rather intimately acquainted with the town and many of its people. If this were the place, and it were any part of my purpose to write about Main Street as well as the mountains, I would pause for a digression on the Little City That Takes Itself Seriously. Maybe I will anyway. No one dislikes the eternal booster any more than I do, not even Rudyard Kipling or Sinclair Lewis; no one is more easily bored with smugness and commonplace self-satisfaction (it is my brand of smugness to think so!). Yet I liked Bend, I went off for a two-day camping trip with its chief booster, I sang lustily in chorus with a hundred and fifty others, at a public dinner, a song to the tune of "John Brown's Body," with the Pollyannaish refrain:

I am satisfied with Oregon,
I am satisfied with Oregon,
I am satisfied with Oregon,
The good old webfoot State.

And the only persons I encountered who bored me and annoyed me were certain lumber magnates from eastern cities (and their wives), there because the great sawmill was there—there, in other words, to exploit the land, and scornful of its real people, its real spirit. I felt toward the wives of these men exactly as Main Street felt toward Carol Kennicott—and I gloried in it! The trouble with Carol was that she was a little egotistical fool, who had no real vision, no real culture. She had no sympathy or love for her fellow creatures.

Bend, to be sure, wears the standard American clothes, goes to the standard American movies, buys the standard American popular magazines, and even tolerates a barytone who sings "The Rosary" in public. The domestic architecture is hideous—though not so hideous as ours was in the East but a generation ago, and still is in many industrial towns and on the fringes of large cities. I think it highly unlikely that psychoanalysis, the latest impersonation by Geraldine Farrar, the plays of John Galsworthy, "expressionism" in art, or even the theory of relativity, are widely discussed at Bend

tea parties. However, there have been times when I, myself, have found other topics more intriguing. Bend—and of course I use Bend as a symbol of hundreds of small cities and towns in those parts of the country that are growing or hope to grow—is most interested in the job of getting on in the world, which is not the highest ambition, but at least is characteristically American, and, after all, good or bad entirely according to what constitutes the civic conception of "getting on". I am very much afraid that any would-be reformer who doesn't accept as a necessary, indeed a basic element of the idea of getting on, the desire for a certain civic impressiveness of size, and an individual desire for a good house, a sure income, and the social security that goes with these things, is doomed to perpetual disappointment. But when the civic idea of getting on means also wide, clean, well-paved streets, when it means setting aside (as so many western towns have done, and so few eastern) a large section of the most attractive land in the community for a public park, in anticipation of growth, when it means a cheerful spirit of coöperation and an almost total lack of dumb withdrawal into the individual shell, letting somebody else do the work, then it seems to me there is hope, there is something to work with. And it is a something not always, alas! to be found

in those beautiful old New England towns which Carol hankered to imitate.

When Kipling landed in the Northwest, many years ago, he found nothing that pleased him except a Chinook salmon. He was especially annoyed with the " booster ", almost as annoyed as some of us have been at his eternal boosting for British imperialism. There is, of course, a type of booster who is a terrible bore, and he is especially to be encountered at Rotary Club luncheons, all across the continent. But, after all, the average booster in the Little City That Takes Itself Seriously is not of this stamp. In the first place, he is too naïf, and in the second place, he has a sense of humor. He knows Bend is not so big as New York, and he knows you know it. But if he rested on that knowledge, he would be a cynic, or a " dead one ". He boosts to keep his ego, and the community ego, up to fighting pitch, to keep life stirring and active, to keep folks " on the way." Carl Sandburg, one of the new poets, said, " I don't know where I am going, but I'm on the way ". The self-satisfaction of the growing Main Streets is, in reality, the outflowing of a feeling that they are " on the way ". To an easterner, from a dying community, this is far from being unpleasant. It is, rather, a tonic; it is life.

But "on the way" where? Ah! there is the real rub. On the way, of course, to the goal of all good Americans—"success", size, prosperity. Whose fault is this? Don't blame Main Street, blame America. Bend kowtows, so far as I could see, to just one thing—the great sawmill which employs so many men, which keeps the railroad busy, which means so much to the prosperity of the place. And that sawmill is what? It is privilege, land monopoly. Set before Bend, and all the other Main Streets, the goal of abolishing that privilege, and making the sawmill not a fickle master (that will depart when the forest is all destroyed), but a servant to work for the people forever, and you would put them "on the way" to something that could utilize all the booster spirit, all the neighborliness and coöperative good-will. It is something larger than Carol Kennicott's vision of a pure Georgian schoolhouse, and to achieve it will take something more than Carol's patience and persuasion and tolerance of human dullness and conservatism.

I ought to add that the Bend booster, who took me camping and fishing far up on Newberry Crater, when he got me there backed me into a pile of lava fragments whence there was no escape, and read to me a motion-picture scenario. In New York, no doubt, it would have been a play. But nobody in the

Northwest (or the Southwest, or large portions of the Middle West, and the South) ever sees a play. It was a scenario about the older Oregon of McLaughlin and Fremont, and it wasn't written to "boost" anything. It was written out of a great love for this state, for its picturesque history, for its scenic beauties, an attempt to put some of these things honestly into the only dramatic medium which has any validity on Main Street, the motion picture. Would Carol, I wonder, have scorned it because it was not a drama in blank verse? I think our scorn should rather be for the entire nation, which permits its films to be debauched into the tragic trash which is now broadcast over the land.

But at this rate I shall never get to Minto Pasture, certainly not if I permit myself another digression, on the subject of motion pictures. I have probably quite forgotten to say that looking west from Bend you see, perhaps thirty or forty miles away, but apparently close by, the splendid snow-covered pyramids of the Three Sisters, ten-thousand-foot mountains perpetually reminding you of the high trails they sentinel. And your Oregon Main Street very speedily becomes a high trail, after all—a fact which the average Oregonian does not forget. His mountains are not only close to him, they are dear to him, and he turns to them,

and deep into them, at every possible opportunity. From Bend it was our plan to strike in to Mount Jefferson, and attempt an ascent, if conditions permitted. There was no certainty that we could even reach the usual base for the climb, because of the snow, and we could find no one who knew of any other way up. The only certainty was that the mountain couldn't be climbed at all from the east. With this delightful uncertainty flavoring the trip with adventure, we rose one morning at an unearthly hour, breakfasted at an all-night lunch counter, and sped away up the road just as the sun was rising over the world rim, and the jack-rabbits, through with their night's feeding, were scooting across the highway seeking cover in the sage brush. The road was smooth and hard, and we tore along with the hares flying out of our path like snow before a rotary plow. Ahead of us, in the crystal air of dawn, the sentinel white peaks stood up above the blue range in shining glory, from the Three Sisters in our path, past Washington and Three Fingered Jack, to the splendid, symmetrical, sharp cone of Jefferson, our goal, and then, almost a hundred miles away to the northward, but beautiful and tremendous, the white temple of Oregon's gods, the Fuji of America—Mount Hood.

We were bearing northwestward now, through

wheat raised by the heart-breaking process of dry farming, through sage brush, through scattered groves of junipers, most ancient looking of trees, then at last into the yellow-pine forests again, by a road that was but a track winding between coppery trunks. Forty or fifty miles, and we pulled up in the heart of the forest, at the base of a fine, symmetrical, eight-thousand-foot, forested dome called Black Butte, and beside a cool and rushing stream. Here, in a small clearing, surrounded by a rough, weathered picket fence, was the house of the United States Forest Ranger for the district. Facing the house was his barn. And in the paddock were seventeen horses awaiting us. We unpacked the cars, and ran them into the barn, bidding them a cheerful goodbye. They are useful things, but the high trails start where their usefulness ceases, and there is nothing about them anywhere, at any time, which can match the thrill of a live horse beneath you.

It took what was left of the morning to get our train packed and saddled, and I had time to explore a little along the banks of the Metolius River, the stream which pours up out of two or three huge springs not far away and flows past the ranger station a steady volume of marvelous cold water. I hadn't gone a hundred feet away from the road

and the bridge before I came upon one of the finest clumps of Jacob's ladder (*polemonium occidentale*) which I ever saw. To be sure, I have not seen many. It is a wild flower that grows in the East, but only in favored sections. I know of none in the Berkshires, though it is found in Vermont, and in parts of New York. The clumps by the Metolius were so close to the water's edge that the outer stems hung over the stream. Each plant was two feet across, and at least equally tall, with copious sprays of the lovely, phlox-like blue or purplish flowers. The whole plant, in its method of growth, its odd, pretty arrangement of little leaves like ladder rungs up the stems, and its flowers, delicate in shape and color and with the added charm of paler blue veinings, a bright yellow eye, and long, protruding stamens and pistil, and in its affinity for cool streamsides, is a thing of rare beauty. No garden which possesses a pool or brook or moist corner should be without it. Here by the bank of the Metolius I stayed so long admiring it that I scarcely had time to notice the great variety of plants and flowers flourishing in that favored spot, some of them complete strangers to me, before I was summoned to do my share in the packing. I shall never be quite happy till I get back there, to spend a week, or a month, beside that crystal stream, in the profound

and fragrant peace of the pine forest, in a climate where all summer long it never rains, and you can go off for a day and a night with your coffee pot and blanket roll, in perfect security, and in a spot where every day brings its wealth of new wild flowers making gardens of every glade.

At last we swung off up the trail, with fifteen miles to make that afternoon, and all of us, except the guide and his helper, saddle shy. We were headed through the pine woods, directly toward the Cascade Divide. Here, in the national forest, the value of fire protection was startlingly apparent, for not only was the forest floor sown thickly with seedling pines, but in the clearings of old fire scars the young trees were shooting up twenty or thirty feet. The undergrowth, also, was much more varied and luxurious, insuring a slower evaporation. The trail, however, was choking with dust, for the soil is everywhere of the same volcanic nature, and here conditions were aggravated because a band of sheep had been recently driven over. However, the subject of sheep in our western mountains is something else that tempts me to a digression which would too long delay our arrival at Minto Pasture. I must heroically refrain. I will say, though, that some day we shall wake up, as a nation, to realize that one old New England pasture will support

more sheep than an Oregon mountainside, which will result in improving the New England pastures, the Oregon mountainsides, and the condition of nearly everybody's purse.

A pass over the Oregon Cascade Divide is quite a different matter from a pass over the Continental Divide in the Rockies. In the first place, the whole formation of the range is different. It is a series of parallel waves of wooded mountains, many miles across, cut by innumerable erosion cañons in various directions, and seldom is the average height over five thousand or at most six thousand feet. The actual Divide is woven back and forth over the ridges and plateaus. Out of this range, at irregular intervals, sometimes fifty miles apart, sometimes much closer, rise the snow-clad cones of the major volcanoes. Mount Hood is the most northerly, thirty miles down from the Columbia River gorge. The next is Mount Jefferson, seventy miles south of Hood. Jefferson is 10,523 feet high. There is no other outstanding peak for about twenty miles, when the odd, sharply spiked spires of Three Fingered Jack rise up 7,792 feet. The trail we were following crossed the Divide just north of Three Fingered Jack. We climbed steadily, but not steeply, through a forest of diminishing height, but increasing interest, for the yellow pines gave way to

a great variety of trees, including specimens of the beautiful incense cedar, and a variety of shrubs, too. We had no sight, however, of our goal, Mount Jefferson, and on the Divide itself there was little suggestion of high mountains, for at this point it is a considerable heavily forested plateau, whereon all trace of dust had disappeared, and we climbed over snowdrifts or sloshed through pools where the drifts had just melted. Once we stopped to rest by a wild little lake, in a cirque of broken lava, surrounded by paintbrush blooms, and reflecting just the spires of Three Fingered Jack beyond.

It was getting dusky when we began to go downhill again, but we could plainly see a change in the vegetation. We were on the west side of the Divide, where the clouds from the Pacific strike and condense. The trees were thicker together, and taller. The yellow pines had vanished. There were many great cedars, and hosts of spring beauties on the ground—as if, in July, we were going back into our own eastern Maytime. There were ferns, too, and moss on the stones, giving to the woods a quality of home. When we reached Marion Lake, and trotted down through the trees to the shore, the forest was dark behind us, and it was only by looking out on the water that we were assured there was yet day, though none too much. Our tents were

hastily pitched, and if it had not been for the pneumatic sleeping bags, we should have spent an uncomfortable night.

It was, however, a delightful camp. The lake was framed from our tent doors by great tree boles, and directly across the lake rose the steep lava spires of Three Fingered Jack, their bases white with snow. There was a moon that night, full out over the water, and under its magic the mountain became some great strange castle in a dream, and the golden moon-path on the water was the luring road to the castle gates. We were not alone on the lake, either. Other campers were a few hundred yards away. We could see the red gleam of their fire through the forest, and hear snatches of their songs, which came pleasantly to our ears—from this distance. They were the last human beings we were to see or hear for a week.

The next morning we packed and saddled early, anxious to get the horses to some better pasturage—the question of forage being a serious one in the Cascades. The trail took us at first over a broken but spring-dampened ledge of rock at a considerable height above the lake, with the timber coming down from above close to the path. And here, at the very start of the day, we had our first floral thrill—the so-called " Mount Hood lily "—that is, it is the

Mount Hood lily in Oregon; officially, it is the *lilium Washingtonianum,* or Washington lily. It grows from California to the Columbia, at altitudes of from three thousand to seven thousand feet, in rich soil and partial forest shade, often, also, as above Marion Lake, protected by shrubbery. The stems rose, in these specimens we now first saw, about three feet, rather thick, purplish stems, with many whorls of rippling and highly polished glossy leaves. Each stem bore at the top anywhere from three to ten (in one or two specimens even more) wonderful lilies, three or four inches across, with petals divided to the base and spreading wide apart, with yellow anthers and green pistils. The buds and the freshly opened flowers were virgin white; they were like Easter in the woods. But the older blooms, even before they showed any signs of withering, had turned to lavender. Those which were plainly past their prime were almost purple. And their fragrance! All lilies have a certain characteristic odor, but this one adds a rich and yet delicate perfume of its own, suggesting, as much as anything, a carnation, but a carnation spiced with the smell of forests. There must have been twenty or thirty stalks of these wonderful flowers along the moist ledge, and all but two of them we left. The rest of the day my eyes kept traveling to right and

left through the forest for more, yet with one or two solitary exceptions, conspicuous in their very loneliness, we saw no others.

But how much else we encountered on that ride! The morning was hardly in its stride when we picked our way down a long slope of broken lava, leading into a heavily timbered cañon, and entered that timber to gasp in amazement. Every one, I suppose, gasps with amazement when he first rides into a major stand of Douglas fir. The thing is incredible, overwhelming. I don't know how tall these trees were—two hundred and fifty feet, I presume. They looked as high as the Washington Monument. It was surely a hundred feet to the lowest limbs. Their trunks at the base were at least ten feet thick, and the great brown scales of elephantine bark looked old as the very soil of the forest. But most wonderful was the density of the stand. There must have been fifteen of these giants to the acre in spots, giving a lumber footage that certainly explains, if it doesn't justify, the lust of the lumbermen to get at them. No, that was not the most wonderful. Most wonderful were the tiny gardens at their feet, gardens of little twin flowers where the sun struck in, growing up in confident masses right between the huge root-toes of the giants.

We rode for several miles down the cañon, winding our way through the sun and shadow of these majestic brown columns, pygmies at their feet; and riding purposely at the rear, I watched the golden sunlight splash on the canvas coverings over the pack horses' loads, or the heads of the leaders go out of sight around some vast trunk—a perpetual play of light and shade, an unconscious pageant of the forest trail.

We lunched at the foot of the cañon, where the horses found pasture, and we let them feed for two hours or more. Then we struck up a little-used side trail, headed eastward (we had been traveling north all the morning), and presently came into a great clearing which was probably caused by a forest fire. At any rate, the entire steep mountain wall confronting us was covered only with scrub second growth and dense shrubbery, the slick ear bush prevailing. This wall was so extremely steep that it seemed unlikely the trail went up it. For my horse's sake, I hoped that it didn't, for the day was excessively warm, and the horses were hot, tired, and still underfed. However, it did. It was a forest-ranger trail, made with the least expenditure of money, too, so that the switchbacks followed a grade much nearer thirty per cent. than the standard twelve per cent. of the national parks. Panting,

sweating, and with wheezing gasps and snorts, the horses toiled upward, the poor pack beasts having to be coaxed and sworn at. The climb was a matter of four or five miles, and rests were frequent and necessary. Soon we were up where we could see over the cañon below into the tumbled, rolling ranges to the west, but a wall still blocked the whole eastward view. Indeed, the sun was already almost resting on the western ranges when we began to pull easier, over a lessening grade. The sun was on the western ranges, and sending our shadows far out to the eastward, when we broke suddenly out of a patch of firs and shrubs, into a forty-acre lush green pasture, which domed up gently ahead of us against the pearly east.

And then we stopped, and the horses stopped, though not for the same reason. The horses plunged their noses into the tall, cool, succulent grass. We plunged our eyes into it, and sent them roving over it, for here was a garden sown by the gods in their happiest hour.

Five varieties were used to plant these forty acres. First grass, which had to grow tall and slender for its life, because it was sown amid an infinite number of fern brakes, of a uniform height, freshly green and graceful. Those two plants, grass and brake, made the green carpet and the

spray foliage for the flowers. The flowering plants were deep blue larkspur (the type flower of our annual delphiniums in eastern gardens), lighter blue mountain lupine, and scarlet gilia. Imagine forty acres of doming green, its texture feathered fern and plumed or lance-like grass, and all stained and patterned blue and red, the blue pure shades of the sky, the red a coral scarlet. Such was the garden we had entered, just as the sunset shadows, pursuing us up the slope, reached our feet, and the cool breath of the summit spaces greeted us.

But the end was not yet. Tugging our horses' heads up out of the ferns and grass, and driving in the pack horses, we moved on through the blue and scarlet, up the dome to the skyline. And, as we crested that skyline, the full loveliness of Minto Pasture burst finally upon us. For just above the first forty acres is another and larger natural pasture, almost level, in which, instead of fern brake, thousands of plants of Indian hellebore rose straight and tall amid the grass, as backing for the blue and scarlet; and, in addition to the three flowers of the lower pasture, here the ground was thickly sown with white mariposa lilies, peeping up at you below the grass tops or the other plants, when you looked down around your feet.

But that was not all. The eastern edge of the

garden was lined with a few scattered fir trees, and then fell away into a hollow. Beyond this hollow were visible the ghost-gray tops of dead trees in a fire scar, and then, not a dozen miles away, and looking hardly a mile, the great white pyramid of Mount Jefferson, solitary and majestic, heaving its snow-fields, pink with sunset, up against the twilight east! For two long days it had been our goal, and for two long days we had not seen it, not since we left the plain just out of Bend. Then it was many miles away. Now we were close upon it, and it burst into our vision alone, without a single rival, dominating the entire eastern sky, and seeming almost to rise out of a great bed of lupine and larkspur, of scarlet gilia and white mariposas. The sun had sunk behind us, and the western ranges were filled with a purple light like some strange brilliant vapor flooding their cañons. Only on the higher snow-fields of the great mountain now did the direct rays linger; then they, too, lost their flash and sparkle, lost their amethyst flush, and stood chilly cold and white against the dusking sky.

Hardly an hour before we were sweltering up the trail; now we shivered as we set hastily about pitching camp. The main camp was set up beside a rough little cabin once used by the forest rangers, and just above a fine great spring in the ravine to

the east. But my wife and I took our tent some distance away, into a grove of firs, and hung it so that the opening faced Mount Jefferson. To gather fuel was simple, for dead wood abounds in a spot so storm-swept as Minto Mountain in winter. The horses were turned out into the pasture, their bells ringing madly as they leaped with clumsy haste on hobbled feet from one rich tuft to another. Warmed again by the exertion of pitching tents and blowing up the sleeping bags, and by our thickest sweaters, we finally sat down to supper by lantern light, as close to the stove as we could get. The altitude was about fifty-five hundred feet, and the thermometer at nine o'clock, on July eighteen, read thirty-eight degrees. We spent little time that evening in merry talk around the camp fire. Instead, we crawled in between our blankets. After I had blown out the lantern in our tent and snuggled down, I could hear the soft fall of the overflow from the spring in the ravine, the occasional tinkle of a cow bell on one of the horses, and the thud of his feet as he hobbled from place to place, the song of the pine surges in the trees overhead as a night wind cruised past, and far off and infinitely mournful, the howl of a coyote.

Our camp on Minto Mountain was almost too pleasant to abandon after a single night, so we spent

Mt. Jefferson from Grizzly Lake. One of America's Most Beautiful and Most Difficult Mountains

the following day traversing the six miles or more of fire scar between its pastured summit and the deep ravine at the immediate base of Jefferson, to study the mountain with binoculars. Between our camp and the wall of this ravine, which is called Hunt's Cove, lay first a descent through dead but standing timber, where the ground was thickly sown with Indian basket grass, as lovely and fragrant, but not so tall as in the Rockies, and then a wide, comparatively level stretch of broken country swept clean by the fire and only beginning to reclothe itself with verdure. This stretch is known as Grizzly Flats, possibly because the grizzly is about the rarest quadruped in the Cascade Mountains. Almost in its centre is a small brown tarn, but a few feet deep and nearly circular in shape, which is surrounded by magenta heather, and holds on its surface as in a mirror the perfect reflection of Mount Jefferson. On the damp margin of this tarn, too, I found several beautiful, tall specimens of the shooting star (*dodecatheon pauciflorum*), a quaint and lively little flower which spits its yellow centre earthward from its red petals, like a falling rocket.

At the western rim of Hunt's Cove the snow had but just melted in the open, and was still several feet deep in the woods. All down the cove sides the drifts lay, and on the cove bottom, eight hundred

feet below, and then on up and up till they merged with the everlasting snows of the mountain. From this point, which is just at the southwest angle of the great pyramid, you see the entire west wall of the mountain from its very base in the timbered ravine. We also could see, in the depth of snow, why our guide had brought us up over Minto to this place, instead of keeping on northward to Jefferson Park, at the northwest angle, where the ascent is generally based. A long study of the slopes that faced us across the cove, however, convinced our mountaineer that there was a practicable way up from Hunt's Cove—if we could get the horses down into Hunt's Cove. Of course, the trail was buried in drifts, and these drifts hung at an angle of forty-five degrees. The guide said he could do it, and we agreed to let him try—they were his horses! So we rode back to our camp in Minto Pasture, and dug plants to carry out with us, storing them as well as we could in tins.

Every one is familiar, of course, with both larkspur and lupine, but the scarlet gilia (*gilia aggregata*) is known only to those friends of mine who have traveled in the West—and not to all of them. I have never found it listed in a seed or nursery catalogue, so that I fancy it must be a shy and difficult plant to breed in domesticity. Certainly,

if it were not, but were adaptable like its blue companions, it would be as famous as phlox or larkspur. In height somewhat lower than a well-established cardinal flower, and in color a much lighter and more brilliant note, its manner of growth on the stem nevertheless more nearly resembles our cardinal lobelia than any other flower I can think of for comparison. There are fewer individual flowers in the head, however; they are scattered more delicately on the stem, and they much more resemble little scarlet trumpets pointed out to the four winds. I have in my library two bound volumes of Paxton's "Magazine of Botany", published in England in 1834–35, by David Paxton, who evidently experimented to a large extent with the many varieties of seeds brought back from the Northwest by Douglas. He records that the scarlet gilia (which he classifies as *ipomopsis elegans,* though Don had already classed it as it is placed to-day) was introduced into the garden of the Horticultural Society in 1827, but that "it is very impatient of cultivation", tends suddenly to disappear without any rhyme or reason, and cannot stand full sunlight. (In the Cascades I never saw it anywhere but in full sunlight.) An extraordinarily beautiful flower, is Paxton's conclusion, but the very deuce to raise. He couldn't even make up his mind whether it was a perennial or not.

It is now listed as both, but evidently it is no easier to grow outside of its native soil and setting than Paxton found it. Nor am I sure that this is to be regretted. Some, at least, of our loveliest wild flowers should remain forever untamed, and only to be seen by him who hunts them out in their natural settings and their utmost fastnesses. I feel toward them as I feel toward a mountain; no mountain should have a road to the summit, it should be conquered on foot or not at all. He who cannot or will not climb does not deserve the freedom of the peak.

We devoted most of the following day to getting our pack train into Hunt's Cove. Rapidly crossing Grizzly Flats by the now familiar trail (one passage over a high trail in the wilderness endears it to you like a friend), with the great mountain standing up white in the dazzling morning light, we began at once to prospect for a way down the steep wall, putting our horses over six- and eight-foot drifts in the timber, still packed so hard that they held us firmly up. At one spot, beside a steep wall of broken lava fragments, we came upon thousands of *trillium grandiflorum* in full bloom, enjoying in mid-July their belated spring. I have never seen so many together, not even in a nursery. My own little wild flower garden at home came into my

memory, with its row of white trilliums scarcely twenty feet long, and I wondered if next spring I could look at them without a pang of longing for this garden in the wilderness.

We worked back and forth wherever we could find a declivity that wasn't too steep for the animals' hoofs to cling to, until we were perhaps half-way down. Then there was no more possibility of an easy grade. Everywhere, to right and left, the snow pitched down at forty-five degrees. There was nothing to do but coast, and almost before us was a chute designed for the purpose—a clean white scar in the forest, made by some landslide or snow avalanche. It was about twenty feet wide, and led straight as an arrow down to the lush meadow of Hunt's Cove. The photographer got out his movie camera, and mounted it beside the chute, a hundred feet below the top, in order, as he explained, that we might have acquired plenty of momentum before we passed. The slide exactly cut the square finder on the diagonal from one corner to the other—exactly forty-five degrees of smooth snow slope! We sent my wife down on foot, with an alpenstock, through the timber, and the rest of us, leading our horses in single file, began the descent of the chute. Three steps, and the horses began to slip, and their hoofs to break through to the knees or shoulder.

They would stagger up, slip again, and make a lurching leap forward, bracing their forelegs to stop themselves. We, just ahead of them with their bridles, would have to leap as far as they did, or, if we couldn't do that, leap to one side to avoid being struck. We had to keep our balance—if possible. As we jumped and slipped and stumbled and tumbled past the camera, the pack horses by this time all out of line and crowding down upon us in a mad confusion, the photographer ground his crank with shouts of delight, crying "Action! More action!"

One of the noblest things I have ever done was to go back up the slope, after my frightened, trembling horse was tethered, and carry that man's heavy metal tripod down the chute for him!

The bottom of Hunt's Cove contains a delightful little green meadow, ringed with tall evergreens, but this meadow was now streaked with drifts, and patterned with running brooks of melting snow-water. Where there was no brook, the ground was wet as a sponge, and starred with white cowslips. At the lower end of the meadow, however, the streams gathered together into a single creek, waist-deep and twenty feet across, which ran northward into the woods, and presently leaped over a ledge in a tumultuous waterfall. Beside this brook, and near

the fall, we found two or three spots bare of snow, and comparatively dry, and here we made our camp, turning the horses back into the meadow. As I worked pitching my tent and making the camp shipshape I could see the brown water of the creek running rapidly past, between steep, mossy banks, and coming down it, now half submerged, now just above the water, a pair of ousels. They went down, evidently, to the top of the falls, and then returned and repeated their hunt. They minded me, and my vigorous chopping, no more than would a pair of English sparrows. In the dark woods they were the only other living things apparent besides ourselves, and their presence was curiously cheering.

That evening, by the light of a roaring fire which reddened the forest trunks around us, those of us who were to try the mountain the next day screwed the spikes into our boots, two dozen or more half-inch spikes and seven inch-and-a-quarter spikes in each sole and three in each heel. We got ready our condensed luncheon, too, and then were sent to bed by the leader, who himself retired with a small alarm clock, set, to my dismay, at 2:30!

THE ASCENT OF MOUNT JEFFERSON

LATE July—the twentieth, to be exact. Dead silence in the dark forest at the bottom of Hunt's Cove, save for the roar of the waterfall and now and then the faint tinkle of a cow-bell on one of the horses back in the meadow. Suddenly, in the darkness, from one of the tents so dimly discernible that it might have been a snow-drift, the *brrrrrr* of an alarm clock, followed by a shout, and the lighting of a lantern in the tent, which became translucent with moving shadows on its walls. Then a lantern lit in another tent. Presently the lanterns came forth into the open, and drew together. A red fire-glow sprang up in the stove, two shadowy figures moved away through the trees to catch the horses, there was a smell of food, of coffee, above the musty odor of the forest mould just emerging from snow.

Such must have been the impression of the scene, but I was in no condition to observe it. Roused from the abyss of sleep and shivering with cold, I

suddenly regretted that I had ever suggested an assault upon Mount Jefferson. I suddenly began to recall, too, that this was my first genuine snow climb. I had scaled a good many rocks, but my technique in snow and ice was, to say the least, sketchy. We were going up a bad mountain by an untried route. I wanted horribly to go back into my sleeping bag again. So much I will now confess. But it was too late to draw back, so I forced down the apology for a breakfast prepared in the gloom by the cold and sleepy cook, and saddled my horse when he arrived. We tied our climbing boots to our saddle horns, shouldered our packs, and waited for the first gray streaks of dawn in the forest. As soon as they came we mounted and rode, five of us, back through the meadow, forded the creek, and put our horses up the steep eastern wall of the cove, which for the first three or four hundred feet was bare of snow, and too recently fire-swept to have anything but fallen timber on it. Once up on this slope, above the forest in the cove, the daylight was more perceptible. Overhead thin dawn-streamers of mist were being harried along by a strong west wind. At the top of the steep pitch we saw the mountain ahead of us, its summit touched with a pink aura. But between us and the lower edge of its permanent and naked snow-fields

lay two or three miles of scrubby timber, still half buried in last winter's drifts, through which we made our way on horseback. This snow was packed and frozen hard, and riding it was easy, except on the steep pitches, where we had to dismount and lead the horses. The dawn vapors were swirling almost around us when we reached timber line. Looking westward, over the night-filled holes of the cañons, we could see the clouds rolling up like surf from the far-off Pacific. The wind was stinging cold, and I felt sorry for my horse as I tethered him in what shelter I could find. He was in for a long wait, poor beast, without fodder and without water. By the time the horses were attended to, our burdens distributed, our boots laced on, and our faces plastered with grease paint, daylight was full upon us, but we could not, of course, see the east because of the great wall of the mountain.

The first of the ascent was up a long, easy snow-field, that led to a naked ridge of broken lava, coming down the mountain like a spine. We had been climbing but a short time when the sun came over the eastern horizon, invisible to us, but making its advent known by an effect of extraordinary beauty. The rushing, thin-shredded vapors, driven in from the west, hit the mountain around and just above us, and then, still traveling at high speed,

slipped like great ghostly snakes up the glittering, smooth incline, enveloped the summit pinnacle, and slid off into space, vanishing against the blue sky. But as the sun came above the horizon, these vapors rushed up and over, directly into his level rays, and suddenly over the whole top of the glittering peak above us was a swirl and spray of rainbow, now forming into a perfect arc, now dissolving in a kaleidoscope of prismatic colors, only to form again as some new mass of thin white vapor rushed into the solar bombardment. All this was three thousand feet above our heads, over a silent waste of blue-shadowed, glistening snow and desolate, naked lava. The display lasted for perhaps ten minutes, as we climbed steadily toward our first objective. Then, as the sun rose higher, the angle was no longer right for refraction, and only colorless, dreary cloud wraiths swept suddenly into golden brightness against the blue.

Attaining the lava spine which comes down the mountain toward the southwest, we could pretty well see the work which lay ahead of us, which was to traverse the western slope, heading upward at the same time, and ascend a high spine which ran down the mountain toward the northwest. Once on that spine, it was apparently possible to reach directly to the base of the northern end of the sum-

mit pinnacle. From here, too, we could see at last why it is necessary to reach the northern end of the pinnacle. It is only that end which is sufficiently inclined off the perpendicular to make the ascent humanly possible. Everywhere else the pinnacle falls down sheer for hundreds of feet, its precipices draped with sheets of glittering ice and hung with cornices of snow. Even that northern end, as I now saw it, rising up amid the rushing vapors, was not exactly reassuring. It was a long, bitter road to reach it, too. The sheer immensity of a mountain does not, cannot, impress you from the valley as it does when you are finally up on its mighty flanks. And here it was so cold, so silent, there was such a wilderness of snow up-ended in our faces, such a vast rotundity of sky to the utmost world rim, and we were so few—and so tiny!

But our leader was not pausing for meditation. He uncoiled the rope, we fastened it about us, and listened to his crisp directions, given not in his usual tone but in a voice that plainly said, Do thus and so, or be picked up in the bottom of the cañon. The bottom of the cañon was invisible, to be sure. Below us the snow slope tilted for a thousand feet, and then ended in air—at the rim of a precipice. Somewhere below that precipice was the cañon bottom. Dropping down on the northerly

side of the lava spine, we found the first three hundred yards of our long traverse to be over finely broken conglomerate, like a mixture of wood ashes and coarse gravel, hung on a slope so steep that it was poised just at the angle of repose. It is sickeningly treacherous footing, when there is nothing to stop you if the slide once starts. Plant your feet down too hard, or drive in your alpenstock too energetically, and you feel under you that same horrid slip and give of breaking ice. We breathed much freer when we reached the snow.

That snow, to be sure, was also tilted at an angle of fifty degrees, shooting downward in a great, widening dazzle, and it was frozen so hard that the foot would not drive into it. Our leader took his little scout ax from its sheath, and using it with his left hand while driving home his alpenstock with his right, and carrying, too, a big camera and plates on his back, stooped briskly forward, cutting every step we took. For the benefit of the uninitiated, I will explain that in snow climbing, when the party is roped, half of the number must have their alpenstocks driven firmly into the snow while the other half step forward one step. Then, as these make their step and drive their stocks home, the first members pull their stocks out and take their forward stride. The process is not so def-

initely separated as that; it looks more like unified motion. But that is the principle. The rope, between two people, must never be so taut that it yanks, or you might be twitched off your balance; but it must never be so slack that it could entangle any one, or that any one could get a good start before the others held him. Now, to advance in this way, and maintain any speed and rhythm, it is absolutely necessary that you drive your stock deep into the snow till it grips firm, with a single motion, and that you pull it out, also, at the right time and with a single motion. If you have to stop and tug, or if you have to shift your balance for a brace, you delay the party, you break up the fifty-fifty rhythm necessary to insure safety, and you may even upset your own footing (which is on a tiny little notch the size of your boot-sole, cut into some thousands of acres of up-ended snow crust or ice!). So, if you have never tried it, you may suppose that you climb with your legs. But after you have actually climbed for an hour, you will say that you do it almost entirely with your back and shoulders. How that alpenstock will embed itself! Your feet are not braced together, either, but one is thirty inches ahead of the other, and can be put nowhere else, at the moment when you must tug your stock out with a

Crossing a Dangerous Rock Chute on the Great Western Traverse of Mt. Jefferson. (Photographed by the Author)

single motion, and not lose your stride, not fall out of the rhythm of the march. You may always have known why the good mountain climber needs a weak head, but now you first truly realize why he needs also a strong back.

We had five snow traverses to make, separated by lava spines, or islands, before the main traverse was reached. On the last of these lesser snow slopes, which was perhaps one hundred and fifty yards across, we saw something that we did not like. This particular rift of snow led directly up, at an ever-increasing steepness, to the very base of the western precipice of the pinnacle. Starting at the foot of the pinnacle and swooping down the centre of the white rift, past us and on down, down, till they ended at the top of the cañon wall far below, were two shining, smooth chutes, almost as cleanly cut and certainly as arrow-straight as if they had been dug for some insane and suicidal toboggan slide. They were ploughed, of course, by the fragments of ice and lava cascaded off the pinnacle, and we could, without great effort, imagine the speed those fragments would have attained by the time they reached the point of our crossing. In fact, without great effort, we could not help imagining this—at least, I couldn't. On reaching the first of these chutes, we found it four feet deep and

six or eight feet wide. The leader cut steps into it and across, while number two played him out on the rope, and the rest of us kept our smoked goggles fixed on the pinnacle above. Nothing happened, however. The sun had not yet reached that side of the precipices, and nothing had been loosened. On the return—but that was a long way off.

When we crossed the last lava spine, and reached the main snow-field which cuts down the west face of the mountain, we saw two more chutes, out in its centre, larger than those we had just crossed. But beyond them rose the great northwest shoulder, dazzlingly white now in the full sun, and its apparent nearness gave me my second wind—or my second back, rather. Once on that shoulder, I thought, our troubles would end for a time. Its slope toward the pinnacle certainly looked easy. So out we went, five little black ants, tied together with a hair, across the great white dazzle, chopping every step, and edging upward steadily. The two chutes here were over six feet deep, and the bottoms of them were polished like a toboggan slide, though they had not reached the basic ice (if, indeed, there is a dead glacier underneath this snow-field). The traverse was perhaps a quarter of a mile across, and then, after a brief rest on a little brown lava island

in the waste of snow, and a fresh application of grease paint to our faces, lips, and necks, for already the dazzle was beginning to blister, we started up the side of the spine, to reach its crest.

It was at this point that, for a few horrible moments, I began to doubt my possession of a weak head. That much of a mountaineer's equipment I had fondly supposed was mine; but when we began to go up a snow wall so steep that to drive in your alpenstock anew you had to lift it over your head, and the snow glare was only a foot from your face, while below you—if you looked down—you saw only the top of the hat on the man beneath you on the rope, and then—nothing, well, at that point I had an attack of imagination. I have never had one on a rock precipice. Presumably the novice's distrust of the strange footing, a footing traditionally slippery and insecure, had much to do with it. But almost as much, I think, was due to the overwhelming cold majesty of the world about me, the glittering pinnacle above, the tremendous snow-field, the endless wilderness of blue cañon-holes and billowing mountains far below, the utter silence. It was the very stupendousness of the thing we were doing, the audacity of our effort, that sent my heart down into my boots.

However, the leader was steadily mounting, step

by step, working his ax in front of his face. I could see the long, cruel spikes on his boot soles as I looked up. And there was nothing for me to do but to mount also.

That pitch of perpendicular was, I should guess, about three hundred feet. It brought us out on a razorback of snow, with a little lava island thrust up through it, where we rested and ate. It was now after one o'clock, and the chill of the morning had departed. The sun, which had made our eyes smart even through our goggles when the snow was so close to our faces, was now hot, and the wind had died almost entirely down. Our instrument showed an altitude of ninety-two hundred feet. It was, then, but a thousand feet or so up the spine to the base of the pinnacle. But alas! nothing can be so deceptive as a mountain. What had looked like an easy grade from below we now saw was actually at a sharp angle. The leader had cut every step from six o'clock till after one, and if he had to cut up this next stretch, there was small hope of getting to the top of the pinnacle. It turned out that he didn't have to, the snow having softened up here in the full sunlight; but even so, the ascent was so slow, and the inclination so steep, calling for a descent backwards a good part of the way, that the best we could do was ten thousand feet, where a

A Rare Photograph of the Summit Cone of Mt. Jefferson, Taken from about 10,000 Feet. The Foreground Snow is Actually Inclined 45°. The Ascent of the Cone has to be Made on the Left-hand Edge

photograph of the summit pinnacle was taken. To climb that pinnacle, under the best of conditions, the leader said (by which I gathered that he delicately implied five skilled men on the rope instead of one), required an hour and a half up and an equal time down. If we tried it, we would not get down to our packs on the spine before six, at the earliest. We couldn't possibly reach the horses by daylight—and he, for one, had no stomach to descend our tracks in the dark, nor to spend the night on the mountain. So, reluctantly, we turned our backs on those final five hundred feet of snow and ice, glittering virgin white in the sky, and began the descent. No, that is incorrect. We didn't turn our backs upon the pinnacle; we continued half to face it, for we had to descend with a sideways motion for safety on the incline.

It was four o'clock when we reached our packs again, rested briefly, and began the precipitous drop to the main traverse. I had no second attack of imagination, however, and thoroughly enjoyed it. The technique of such a descent, in snow, is easily mastered and has a pronounced rhythm. Standing sideways to the slope, with your stock driven home, you swing your inner leg back and then down to the next step, pull out your stock and drive it home a step lower, drop your other foot to the same step,

and repeat. As you look between your two arms, your hands grasping the stock, to see where your foot is going, you see not only the step you aim for, but below that the head and shoulders of the next man on the rope. Below him, perhaps, you see the top of another hat, and then, far down, the glisten of the snow-field sliding away to the shadow-filled hole of the cañon. Firm as you now know these snow steps to be, confident as you are in your stock and your spikes, they seem, in their whiteness, curiously insubstantial, and you have a sensation of being suspended in air. Once your nerves are accustomed to it, the sensation is as pleasantly thrilling as it is curious.

Out on the great traverse we found the rock chutes both widened and deepened since morning. Something had been down, without a doubt. Indeed, we were not fifty feet beyond the second one, when above us we heard a sharp snap, a roar, and then a rushing. We saw the fragment of rock fall from the pinnacle and disappear. For a second we wondered if it would reappear, not in the chute, but on the snow, in the line with us. But almost instantly we caught the smoke of it in the chute, and a few seconds later, with considerably less speed than we had expected, the snow being soft, a piece of lava the size of a hogshead shot down the ditch we,

a moment before, had been climbing through. We went on, cheerfully speculating whether there would have been time to yank a man out of the chute after that first crack of warning from above, and also get the rope clear. We decided there would be—ample. A couple of seconds, perhaps, to spare.

As we reached the lava on the southern side of the main traverse, we paused and looked back. Stretching away from us, across the great expanse of the slope, was a tiny dotted line—the little steps we had cut. This line ran directly to the precipitous shoulder of the spine, and then went straight up it. But now, as the low sun struck in on the mountain, the shadow of a lava spire on that shoulder was thrown blue along the upper face of the snow cliff, creating a perfect illusion of an overhang. Our little footprints went up the dazzling precipice half way, *and then they curved outward and crawled right up around a great blue cornice!* It looked as if we had climbed, like flies, inverted, to get to the top. Even our guide was struck by the illusion. As for me, I gasped once, and then I exclaimed (so they tell me), "It ain't true!"

From this point on, across the remaining traverses, our pace was slow, because some of us—meaning myself, chiefly—were tiring and could not extract our alpenstocks with the trained rapidity of

our powerful leader. Yet we knew that we were in a race with darkness, and once safely over the treacherous slope of conglomerate and out on the lower and gentler southwestern snow slope, where we could separate at last, we skidded and slid downwards, each for himself, our boots sinking knee-deep into soft, wet snow which that morning had been almost ice. Only once did we pause, arrested by the glory of the sunset pouring its rose and amethyst floods of haze into the cañons below us. A hasty photograph, and we went on again.

As we drew near the horses at timber line, the poor creatures neighed their impatience to be off, their hunger and thirst. But it was too late to ride them. An aid in the morning, they were a nuisance now. We could lead them faster down through the soft snow and the dusking woods than we could ride them, and we did not even want to spare the time to change our boots. Tugging at the bridles, for a horse goes reluctantly down a soft-snow slope, we plunged into the chill of the upland forest, sinking to our knees or deeper in the snow, with the sunset glories fading fast, and dusk creeping in upon us. By the time we reached the head wall of the cove it was almost full night, and we had to pick our way down over and around the fallen timber, tugging and swearing at our reluctant

horses, barking our shins, slipping, falling. In the forest at the bottom was pitch-black night. Camp was still half a mile away, and a creek and two dozen brooks and bogs between. I sloshed through six or eight of them, and then I mounted my horse, spikes or no spikes, and let him do the wading.

Ten minutes later we forded the creek close to camp, and suddenly saw, through the dark shadows, the great red glow of a fire. A moment later, and we were before it, wet to the waists, our lips and noses scorched and blistered, our faces still thick with grease paint, our backs aching, and over our whole bodies a profound and inexpressible weariness. It was 9:30. We had been gone over eighteen hours, we had wasted no time on the way—and we had not reached the summit. Probably the latter fact had something to do with our irritable weariness. The watchers in camp, who had expected us before daylight was gone, had been nervous, even alarmed, for two hours. But dinner was waiting, and all along one side of a huge fallen log raged a fire, in this case a safe one, since the log lay surrounded by snowdrifts. Once our wet clothing was removed, and the heat of the great fire came to us through fresh, dry woolen, and once the hot coffee and the hot food were devoured, we felt less irritable, though not less weary. We even

mustered up enough ambition to unscrew the spikes from our boots, before a delicious and overpowering languor stole over us, and we tumbled into our sleeping bags.

It was not until the next morning that I realized my own shortcomings the night before. My wife, who was quite as green at sitting below a snow mountain waiting for me, as I was at climbing it, had spent a rather dreary day, the dreariness passing into uneasiness when night arrived, and we didn't. One of my choice possessions is a book called " On Alpine Heights and British Crags," in which are numerous hair-raising illustrations, and under most of these illustrations you read, " On this slope, in 1903, two guides and five Englishmen slipped and fell to the glacier below "—or words to that effect. My wife began to think of this book. The thoughts were not conducive to comfort, so she sought the conversation of our packer, a long, lank Oregonian of few words. He sounded a cheerful note.

" I don't see why folks wanter do this climbin'," he said. " Riskin' their necks just to get up somewhere there ain't no need o' goin'. Last year a young feller tried to climb Three Fingered Jack. About half an acre come off with him. They got his body, though."

Thus cheered and fortified, my wife awaited in the black forest of the lonely cove some sound or hint that we were coming. At last, she said, a faint halloo was heard, though I fancy it was one of us cursing his slow-footed and stubborn horse. At any rate, she stood on the edge of camp—so I learned the next morning—in a mood to give me something more than normal conjugal welcome. But my only words of greeting—again so I learned the next morning—were these: "Why haven't you got me out a pair of dry socks?"

The dog-weariness of the night before, however, and, I trust, the ego-centric irritability, were gone with the new day. The only bodily reminder I possessed of the climb was a peeling nose, badly cracked lips, and eyes that still smarted. I should have liked nothing better than to have remained in camp there for three days more, so that we could take a tent, blankets, and provisions up to timber line that afternoon, spend the night at the edge of the snow-fields, and with the two hours thus gained on the start of the climb the following morning, and two hours more gained on the descent, have made the full route to the top of the pinnacle. However, the three days were not ours to spend, and I must wait some happier future. At least, we had found a possible route up the mountain from

Hunt's Cove, and demonstrated that, for inexperienced climbers certainly, and probably for any climbers, the full route cannot be made in a day. With that we had to be satisfied.

Still, it was a wrench to break that camp in the cove, not only because it meant abandoning the mountain still unscaled, but because the camp itself, deep in the forest by the rushing creek, was so attractive, and because it had been to us, on a memorable evening, the warmth and shelter and welcome of home when we were ready to the utmost for such warmth and shelter. The air, escaping from my sleeping bag as I rolled it up, was like a sigh.

We left the cove by a different trail from the one we had attempted to use in entering, going directly up the head wall, and aiming to cross the Divide just south of Jefferson. In this way we could get back to our motors in a day—that is, we could if we could get over the Divide at all. No one had yet made the crossing, because of the snow, though it was now almost August. All that morning we rode either through beautiful forests of fir or over wide, open meadows, with anywhere from a foot to ten feet of snow beneath our horses' hoofs. We had to paint our lips and wear our goggles, and it was a mystery how the eyes of the horses stood the glare. We rode, too, in our shirt sleeves, in mid-

summer heat, through woods that looked like Christmas.

Once, when we paused for a rest, before the descent to the east, I saw Jefferson for the last time close by me, and in all its full sweep of snow and lava to the glittering pinnacle. Foolish to climb such a mountain? Incomprehensible, the passion of the mountaineer which takes him up into the dangers of such a height? Let them talk of folly, I thought, who have scaled the heights, but let all others be silent. Up, up, into the great silences, the climber has gone. Over the up-ended snowfields, clinging like a fly to a wall, he has cut his tiny steps, where no steps ever were before, perhaps, and where no steps will be after tomorrow's sun. He, the pygmy, has conquered the heights, he has matched wits with a mountain, he has left his mark, the mark of his will to conquer, the mark of his aspiration, on the sky-borne, eternal snows! As good a thing, thought I, to risk his life for as crossing Fifth Avenue, or helping privilege control the earth and the fruits thereof by means of bayonets and the shibboleth of "patriotism". Yes, quite as good. We plunged on down the eastern wall of the Divide, and slowly Mount Jefferson seemed to sink from sight. Then my meditations ended abruptly, for so did the level earth.

The drop was not great—a matter, perhaps, of two or three hundred feet, before the slope leveled out again enough to ride on. But while it lasted there was nothing to do but dismount and slide. After a week of rough going, we had gradually used up all the rope with which we tied the pack horses into a string, so we had to drive them over the rim and let them shift for themselves. All but one of them made the slide without disaster, but the nag who was carrying part of the bedding (fortunately, not the cameras!) lost his footing, plunged over with a wild snort, and turned three complete somersaults, before he finally came to a temporary rest. He rested long enough to shake off what was left of his load, and then he bolted, followed by three of his companions. After the usual manner of pack horses, too, he bolted in a direction at right angles to the trail, scrambling madly up a snowdrift nearly as steep as the one we had just come down. There was nothing to do but tether our saddle horses and go stalking the runaways, by climbing in the soft snow faster than they did, keeping behind the cover of trees, and finally outflanking them. I may have done hotter work, but I don't now recall it.

This excitement over, we remounted in file again, and soon trotted out on the bank of a lovely little

lake, high up at the end of a deep, narrow cove that widened and deepened away from us, toward the east. We were over the Divide, we were past the snow. Our only reminder now was the glistening pinnacle of Jefferson, just peering up over a ridge across the ravine. Under our feet the trail was dry and dusty. The paintbrush was in bloom—along this trail almost pure pink in color, a shade I have never seen it elsewhere. The familiar shrubs of the dry country were all about us, and the western white pines (*pinus monticola*), which at this altitude are small, slender trees and extremely attractive. The trail we rode was known as Huckleberry Trail, though I failed to find any huckleberries. As it dropped down the wild, rocky side of the cove, growing ever dryer underfoot, till at last the yellow pines appeared again, and between their coppery boles was neither snow nor ferns nor moss nor herbage, but brown, naked pumice, our guide, whose home was in eastern Oregon, pulled up his horse, wiped his dripping forehead, looked all about him and then out over the ridges ahead to the far plains, and exclaimed with emotion:

"Back in God's country!"

He was half aware of the humor in his heartfelt exclamation, and his eyes twinkled.

"Yes, I know it's dry," he added. "I know we

get only nine inches of precipitation a year—if we're lucky. I know everything you can say to me. Just the same, it's God's country."

With that he squared his shoulders, hit his horse with his heels, and resumed the march.

Curiously enough, I had a feeling, too vague for words, that he was right. After our days by the Rogue River, after a week at Crater Lake, amid the pumice and lava, between the blue water and the cloudless blue sky, after our visit in Bend and our rides through the yellow pines, I had thought it something of a relief to get over the slopes into a forest where the mould was dark and damp, where ferns grew and lush grass, where the giant Douglas spruces told of endless moisture, and the snow was like our own winter come again. Yet now I had the curious sensation of coming back home, as we dropped down the parched trail into the copper-sheathed forest.

Once, in the dust of the trail, I came upon the tracks of two bear cubs, which had evidently been playing there within a few hours, but no other life was encountered; even the birds were strangely absent. Jefferson was no longer visible behind us, and in front, now, the trail stretched through the open pine woods that seemed to offer you long vistas, but actually confused the eye with a barrier

of light and shade and copper trunks in a short distance. The way, however, was growing less and less steep, and suddenly widened to a cart track, or lumber road. We kicked our horses to a trot, and left behind us a thin cloud of dust to drift off between the trees. Five miles more, and we jogged into a cleared and pleasant grove beside Eagle Creek, which the neat signs of the Forest Service informed us was a public camp ground. The creek itself was a shallow stream, clear as spring water, rippling over stones, and the horses sank their muzzles into it, while we hurried for our cups. It was three o'clock. We had made twenty miles from Hunt's Cove, on a hasty breakfast, and here we unloaded the horses and ate our belated lunch.

From here, too, a motor road led down to the ranger station where our cars were stored, so while the rest of us waited, the drivers rode on and brought the cars back. In the interval I explored the banks of Eagle Creek, looking for more of the lovely polemonium. I did not find it, however, though I came upon a little green swale full of monkey flowers, and everywhere in the dry woods near the stream were blossoms of many kinds, most of them small and comparatively inconspicuous, but which could be massed for pretty effects in dry places. There is no reason why Oregon gardens

should lack for bloom the season through, in every corner, wet or dry, sunny or shaded, if the gardeners will but use their own native wild flowers. Their problems are far easier than ours in the East, where, for instance, midsummer brings an almost complete blank in shaded places, and the hot, dry, sunny ledge is equally a problem. As yet, however, gardening in Oregon is in its infancy, and the average man's resources are exhausted after he has planted roses in every available spot on his grounds and even along the curbstone of the sidewalk.

It was after six o'clock before we had the motors packed again, and left Eagle Creek, our guides, and the faithful horses. We drove to a ranch beside the enormous springs which gush the Metolius River up out of the ground into a lush green meadow, and here a supper awaited us, a supper strangely like that you might get in some White Mountain farmhouse, except for the lack of maple sugar. It was a pleasant change from camp fare, and it reached an unexpected and thrilling climax with a perfect lemon pie. When I say a perfect lemon pie, I do not speak lightly. I know something about pies. In fact, by inheritance and intensive training, I am a connoisseur in pies. Of all pies, perhaps, a lemon pie is the most difficult to make, the best when made properly, the worst

(always excepting that monstrosity, the prune pie), when not made properly. The one that was now set before us, on a red tablecloth, illumined by a glass oil lamp with a stiff paper shade such as I had not seen since boyhood, was more than an inch thick, topped by a half inch of whipped meringue browned just enough, with little golden drops glistening upon it. The filling was not jellied into stiffness, but yielded to the fork like ripe Camembert cheese. It was sweetly acid to the taste, the true lemon flavor, and under it the browned crust was dry and flaky, without a hint of sogginess. In short, a perfect pie! Had there been another, we would certainly have camped that night beside the ranch and had it for breakfast. But, alas! there wasn't, nor, its creator informed us, any more lemons nearer than Bend, fifty miles away. So we departed, singing its praises.

We departed by moonlight, quite certain that we knew our way back to Bend. But nobody knows his way in eastern Oregon, apparently. Even the road makers are so uncertain of it that they don't dare put any direction posts at the forks, and no two people whom you ask at the scattered homesteads tell you the same thing. We left the ranch at 8:30, with fifty miles to go. We got to Bend at two in the morning, shivering with cold,

having traversed most of eastern Oregon. We were a sun-scorched, unshaven, rough-looking outfit, clothing torn by the fallen timber, boots soaked shapeless by the days of wading in the snow, tired, cold, sleepy, and grimed with dust, who burst through the doors of the Pilot Butte Inn, dragging our dunnage bags behind us, and roused the night clerk from his slumbers.

VI

Sentinels of the Sage

SENTINELS OF THE SAGE

LACES no less than people have their definite personalities, ingratiating or otherwise, and no two mountain ranges, no two deserts are alike. The aspect of the Rocky Mountains as they leap up out of the rolling, flower-gemmed prairie, is totally different from the aspect of the Cascades as they spring from the timber that borders the sage brush. Neither in Washington above, nor in California to the south, even, is the effect the same as in Oregon. Each has its own charm, and its own especial admirers. The long blue wave line of the Rockies, presenting an unbroken though peaked and castellated crest, which seems ever about to break and spill on that endless rolling carpet of wild flowers, is a noble sight. The upheaval is sudden, without warning of foothills, and in the space of half a dozen miles you penetrate from pasture to precipice, from pastures golden with gaillardias, and lilac with bergamot, to precipices that hold the colors of the wild flowers in

their exposed strata of earth crust. The colors of the Painted Desert, of the Grand Cañon to the south, are all to be found in the prairie grass and the cliff walls of Montana, subdued no doubt, and precipitated upon you in less palpitating masses, but there just the same.

But the Cascade Range, seen from the sage brush of eastern Oregon, is something totally different. It has a beauty and a haunting mystery all its own, that have remained unsung no doubt because so few travelers have had the chance to feel them. To secure this view you must go far off the beaten track, and you must go in a motor, for the railroad branch coming down from the main line on the Columbia as far as Bend winds its way at the bottom of the Deschutes River cañon. Before long, to be sure, the motoring will not be difficult, for the state is extending its highways with astonishing energy and engineering courage. But there is still time to take your country in the rough.

Leaving Bend one morning, we motored fifty miles back into the range to Elk Lake, a lovely pond in the woods at the foot of South Sister, one of a group of three ten-thousand-foot snow peaks that stand close together. The road to Elk Lake was a track through the yellow pines, and was chiefly

notable for its serpentine character. An Oregonian from those parts assured us that once he had great difficulty hauling in a load of hay over that road, because the horses kept eating it from the tail of the wagon. We spent a dismal night at Elk Lake, in the midst of a convention of editors. Not that I have any aversion to editors—in their proper place; they have been extraordinarily kind and patient with me, and I am normally disposed to be the same with them. But when they are assembled together in camp by a mountain lake, in the heart of the wilderness, they add very little to the charms of nature. Firecrackers, fish horns, and oratory are poor substitutes for the tinkle of brooks and the soft lap of waves and the sudden, startling slap of a fish jumping for a fly in the midnight moon path. We left the editors in the morning, and cut across lots, headed southeast, passing more than one sad equivalent of the New England abandoned farm. There were clearings in the pine woods, where a few stumps had been hauled from the parched volcanic ash which is the soil, a rough board cabin and barn erected and perhaps a fence or two—and then the whole effort abandoned by the homesteader. Nor did you wonder at it, for without irrigation no farming could well be more discouraging. Dry farming on a large scale, where

the fields alternately to lie fallow are extensive and already clear, and where the return can be large enough, also, to buy some of the luxuries of life, may be a possible existence. But to clear a dry farm in the forest, and to depend for all one's subsistence on what those few parched acres can produce, requires something less than courage; I should rather call it feeble-mindedness.

By afternoon we had lunched and crossed the north-and-south highway at La Pine, and then, for a matter of fourteen miles, we traveled in low speed, steadily up and up and up, through the never-ending forest of yellow pines. Once we stopped and lowered the cameras down a thirty-foot cliff, sliding down the rope after them, to photograph Paulina Falls, where they leap into a gorge they had cut in the lava. Then we resumed our low-speed grind. We were climbing a mountain called Newberry Crater, an old volcano not, some think, entirely devoid of life yet, which stands many miles east of the range. The outer rim of the summit is over eight thousand feet high, but the road runs into and across the bottom of the crater, a considerable area of wild, desolate heaps of lava fragments and cinder piles, interspersed with stunted forest, and holding two fine lakes, full of big fighting trout. We camped that night by the

larger of the lakes, at the base of a volcanic slag heap fifty feet high and a quarter of a mile long, composed of gloomy black fragments of flint-like obsidian mixed with chunks of pumice stone as light as dry sponges. In these piles the Indians got their arrowheads and other implements; but they were gloomy as some circle of Dante's hell, and over us lowered a black thundercloud, breaking in the only rain we saw all summer, a rain so bitter cold we expected it to turn into snow at any moment. I am not advocating Newberry Crater as a resort for any but confirmed anglers and geologists. Indeed, I mention our camp upon it merely because it proved to be the gateway to one of the loveliest prospects America affords.

All signs of the storm had vanished before morning, and the sun rose clear. The air was not only clear, it was autumn cold, a north wind lashing up soapy waves on the green lake. We shivered around the breakfast fire, and later sought out the sheltered southern side of a slag heap for a scenario conference. Huddled over our slips of manuscript, with the piles of polished black fragments of obsidian, the lumps of pumice, the broken-up spew of past eruptions, heaped behind and around us, we must have looked like conspirators in some burnt-out hell. In the afternoon we started down the

mountain by a new Forest Service road on the northeast side, a steep climb over the rim of the crater, and then a long descent through a dry forest clothing the ash heap which is the mountain, with constant vistas through the trees of the far-stretching, blue-green desert of eastern Oregon.

At the bottom of the mountain we found ourselves still in the yellow-pine forest, and for a long time we rode through its park-like monotony of gently undulating vistas down sun-flecked aisles between the gleaming copper columns. All the autumnal chill of the crater had vanished down here. The dust rose in clouds behind our wheels, and the scant herbage hung parched and breathless in the heat. There is something still and uncanny about a desert forest (if one may employ that adjective and noun together). The mystery of such impressive tree growth in so arid a soil, the absence of soft greenery along the forest floor, the hush, the endless monotony, become hypnotic in time, and bring a great drowsiness upon you.

After perhaps twenty miles of this forest, we broke suddenly out of it into a great hollow of sage brush, a shallow pan a mile wide. The sharp edge of the pines was behind us, and on the other three sides the naked earth swelled up in a circular ridge, cutting against the sky. Sage brush, a little sparse

grass, a startled jack-rabbit scampering away, a white scar of road cutting the hollow and mounting over the western rim—and the dome of blue. Have you ever swum, or rowed in a small boat, far out from shore, when the sea was running in long, heaving swells? You ride on the crest of a swell, then you slide down its polished incline and find yourself in a green hollow, your vision quite cut off and only the wave crests all around you undulating in a sharp, translucent line against the sky. Imagine that wave hollow to be a mile across, and you have something the sensation that was ours when our car first broke out of the pines into the naked sage. We sped across the hollow, and as the car took the incline of the western ridge at high speed, the sensation was still that of riding a wave. Up and over she went, and then seemed to hang of her own accord, arrested by the sudden prospect.

Ahead of us stretched mile after mile of rolling sage brush, till the far-off, hazy forest began, rising in green waves of timbered foothill buttes to break at last against the blue rampart of the range. And rising from this range, remote, mysterious, dazzling, icy-white and beautiful, from Diamond Peak to the southwest clear to Jefferson in the north, stood the sentinel summits—the Three Sisters, Broken Top, Washington, Three Fingered Jack, with old

Jefferson himself the highest, the most remote, the most inaccessible and alluring. He might have been a pyramid of glistening cloud. These peaked white volcanoes, shooting up so far above the level of the blue range, seem to hold mystic converse one with another over the cañons between. Here in the desert, forty miles away from the nearest of them, their lower ledges were indistinguishable; they were solid cones of white. Indistinguishable, too, were the separate lower peaks around them. They but towered the crest of an unbroken wall. The nearer green buttes, however, were separate entities, swelling out of a dim sea of forest, and in that middle space of forest and foothills between the rolling sage and the snow-clad pyramids was Wagner's " mystic abyss ". At Bayreuth, you remember, he and his architect strove to create a certain space between the spectators and the stage which should serve to throw the stage pictures and the action back across a gulf, into a realm removed from the close contact of the actual. This space they called " the mystic abyss ". There is no mystic abyss as you approach the Rocky Mountains over the prairies. But here we found it, and those great dazzling cones which aspired so sublimely into the western sky, with the low sun dropping down to kindle their summits, were as cool, as aloof, as

charged with mystery and portent, as the white gods of a dream. . . .

Three tents at the edge of the pine woods, between the coppery columns. Beyond, and away, the long swells of the sage brush, with twilight creeping into the hollow like a purple shadow. In the east, a belt of mother-of-pearl along the horizon, tinting upward into pink, salmon in the west, and then the faded afterglow where the snow peaks float in a bath of light. One by one, as night came on, they grew more cloud-like, more ethereal, seeming to dissolve in air. Jefferson went first. The Three Sisters lingered, floating white without any base, long after the eye, cast down into the hollow of the sage brush, or trying to penetrate the aisles of the forest, reported that darkness had come. Then they, too, vanished, and from the naked ridges of the open country we saw our camp fire gleam red and friendly in the purple wall of pines, while overhead the stars blazed out and through the sage brush at our feet whimpered the plaintive ghost of a lost wind.

The road from Bend northward to The Dalles, on the Columbia River, is a long, hard day's trip, but it has its constant fascinations, because for miles on end you travel across bare country, along

ridges and plateaus, which give you uninterrupted view of the sentinel snow summits. Sometimes you see them across acres upon acres of golden wheat, sometimes across sage brush, sometimes across desert land of gray ash and lava spew, where even the sage is discouraged. And once, at least, you see Jefferson in all its breadth and height, across the yawning chasm of the Deschutes cañon. The cañon is a wild gorge plowed out of a wild and arid land. Behind you lies nothing but seeming desert, wave upon wave of sun-parched dreariness. At your feet yawns a gulf of desolation. But across this gulf, across this mystic abyss, rises the white mountain, glittering with ice and snow, cool, serene, its attendant foothills verdure-clad.

Again, the road plunges you into some cañon, and you lose all sight of mountain or plain, confined between naked, jagged walls of volcanic stuff, where you come with a shock of surprise on flowing water, a field of fragrant alfalfa, and then a white house, with a white picket fence, sitting as peacefully under its great poplar trees as if it were in old New England. When I was a boy, I used to read with delight a poem by Whittier about a sea captain who was wrecked in an arid country and made a vow that if he were saved he would go home and dig a well beside the highway. He was

saved, and he went home and dug the well. The poem always made me deliciously thirsty, so I had to go out to the pump as soon as I'd finished it. This poem came back to me when we reached, in the heart of Antelope Cañon, the trickling stream, the narrow band of green alfalfa, the white house with its clean, fresh fence, its riot of roses, its cool-shadowing trees. I had not been thirsty before, but now I had to drain a canteen of its last drop.

Again the road led down a long steep grade, dug perilously out of the side wall of a tributary erosion gulch, to reach the bridge across the Deschutes River. There was an incredibly hot and dusty and treeless and beauty-less little town at the bottom, and then a staggering grade on the other side, till we reached the level again and saw the serene pyramid of Mount Hood in front of us, and felt the cool wind sweeping down from the snows. Yet another descent, to another town, less dusty and blessed with trees, and then yet another endless climb, six miles of road that wound up the side of a naked cañon, with no guard rail and no chance to see around the bends what was coming toward you, six miles in low speed with the hole in the earth steadily deepening almost under your wheels—and then Mount Hood again, nearer now, its glaciers glit-

tering, and a long downward race through miles of wheat and the outposts of the orchards, to the final plunge into the gorge of the Columbia.

VII

The Columbia Highway

THE COLUMBIA HIGHWAY

THE Columbia Highway is in every way extraordinary—in its length, its conquest of engineering difficulties, its rugged picturesqueness, its blessed immunity, for a considerable portion of its extent, from advertising signs, its almost constant companionship with the great green river that gives it name. But it was not on the Columbia Highway that I received my parting thrill from Oregon, when, following our trip from Bend to The Dalles, we ran down the Highway to Portland. It was on a detour. We didn't have to take this detour; we could wait until twelve o'clock, when the main road would be opened. In fact, we were strongly advised not to take it. But as the hour was then 8:30, and as our cars had been conquering impossible grades and traversing dizzy ledges for a month past, we saw no particular reason for sitting idly in front of a steam roller all the morning. We turned up the detour road.

A detour on the Columbia Highway, before it

breaks through into the plains, is not a simple matter. The Columbia River to reach the sea had to break through the foundation basalt of the Cascade Mountains. It succeeded admirably in this formidable task, but it wasted no effort in the process; it made a gorge large enough to pour its own waters through, but left very little room for anything else to negotiate the passage. The railroad manages to hug the lower bank, but there were times when the Highway engineers could get past some precipitous headland or sheer cliff only by climbing over it or tunneling through. It was a sufficient task to build one such road; naturally there are not two. So when a detour is called for, there is nothing to do but climb some old road leading up a side gorge to the very top of the basalt barrier into which the river has cut for two thousand feet, and wind along over the top till you find another old road leading down again. These old roads, of course, were laid out (or, rather, they happened) before the days of motors, and probably before the days of wagons. It was one of them which we now took, leading upward beside a rushing brook. The grade was not as bad as some we had encountered elsewhere in the state. It may have reached twenty per cent. in spots, but in the Siskiyou cañon we had surmounted a grade of thirty per cent. There was

nothing to do but keep on, anyway, having once started. To turn around was quite impossible, and to back down the act of a madman. So we kept on, for five or six miles, passing a few pathetic little orchards which had been hopefully planted in clearings on the slope, much as our pioneer New England farms were often hung on our hills, to leave us wondering to-day not that they have been abandoned, but why they ever were there at all. The top of the ridge was heavily timbered, and when we began to descend, down a deeply cut erosion gorge, it was still in timber. We had dropped some little distance, with our engine in first speed compression and our brakes protesting, while we prayed that nobody was trying to come up the hill to meet us, before we rounded a turn-out high up on the side of the gorge, and the view suddenly smote us.

I know of nothing quite like that view elsewhere in America. Just to our left, the side of the gorge fell away from under our very wheels into a hole filled with dark fir trees, and then rose again on the farther side to a jagged skyline. In front of us the gorge opened directly into the Hood River valley, but at such an acute angle that we looked up the valley as well as into it. Out of the dusky fir shadows of our gorge, as out of some window in a great, dim house, we saw the bright green orchards

swimming in sunlight, too rank, too luxuriant, to form checkerboards, but still with a certain plan to their composition as the white roads threaded between them and the white houses or the red barns peeped from their enveloping green. Across the valley rose the hills again, but it was up the valley that our eyes traveled, up a valley that grew narrower and narrower, its bounding green hills higher and bluer, to meet at last in the supreme mountain, the Fujiyama of Oregon, the snow-white, dazzling, serene pyramid of Mount Hood. It was, perhaps, twenty-five miles away, but in this clear air it looked not more than ten. Exactly at the valley's head, it swept the whole composition into focus at its base, took it up its symmetrical slopes, and drew it to the dazzling needle point of its summit peak far up against the blue. Or better, perhaps, it radiated the composition down from that sky-borne summit, with its dropping glaciers, as their waters come down to put the juice into the apples and cherries.

If Hood River were like Wenatchee, or like a hundred other irrigated orchard settlements, this view would lose much of its incomparable charm. But this is not an arid land. Looking down on it from the hills, you see little or none of the bare gray soil, nor are the slopes that hem it in naked rock and lava. The slopes are dark with fir, and

the valley floor seems as happily verdant as some English vale. The whole valley is pastoral under its flood of golden sunshine, and over it broods the majesty of a single and supreme snow mountain. I had once known a Hood River man who abandoned an excellent position in New York, holding the promise of fame and fortune, to go back home again. Now, at last, I understood.

We lunched that day in Hood River, at the house of friends, with a tablecloth spread on the lawn under cherry trees that still bore a few dark fruits overlooked by the pickers. From this lawn Mount Hood was neighborly, looming over the orchard trees to the southward, while northward, across the gorge of the Columbia, we could see Mount Adams hanging like a white cloud. There was already a smell of apples, faint but unmistakable, from the early fall varieties. There were garden flowers blooming beside the house, along the paths, for Hood River has long passed the boom-town stage. For a community which takes all its riches from the soil, it is strangely compact and neighborly, too, each grower living in the centre of his ten acres or so of orchard, so that the valley supports a large population and everybody is within easy reach of the town at the lower end, where Hood River joins the Columbia. It seems, to the casual tourist, a

kind of Arcadia, where every Arcadian owns a motor car and watches the sunset gild Mount Hood.

From Hood River to Portland we followed once more the Columbia Highway, winding under castellated cliffs and past the feet of far-leaping waterfalls, or climbing by winding grades up through the fir forest to reach the top of some headland two thousand feet above the river, whence the eye swept for miles back into the splendid gorge, and saw, across the river to the north, the snow summits of Adams and St. Helen's. Some of the cliffs beside the Highway look as if they would afford excellent rock climbing, this basaltic formation being much harder and firmer than the superimposed volcanic stuff of the higher Cascades. But we had to pass them by, to save, perhaps, for that "next time" which you always promise yourself when you are leaving the West.

Running out of the gorge at last into the plain, it was not alone that the natural beauty of the scene grew less; those most abominable evidences of man, the roadside sign-boards, became suddenly apparent. They came upon us with a horrid shock. Never, I think, had they seemed to me quite so ugly, so stupid, so symbolic of what is worst and cheapest in our civilization, as on this day. The state of Oregon has so far managed to keep them out of the

Columbia gorge, but that appears to be the best it can do. Through the plains to Portland they flaunt their ugliness as in any Jersey suburb. It is a curious commentary on our particular stage of semi-civilization that we will tax ourselves millions of dollars to build scenic highways, from a genuine love, apparently, of the escape thus offered into regions of natural beauty, and then have neither the sense nor the courage to control the greed of the few who promptly disfigure the landscape with hideous signs. My own village, an old and elm-shaded New England street, lies on a main highway through the Berkshire Hills. Directly at the approach, just before you cross a bridge and go in under the first arch of elms, a well-known tire company which dispenses historical information of dubious accuracy by means of sign-boards, has erected a vast open book completely destroying the charm of the picture. I do not greatly blame that company for wanting to sell its tires, though I have never bought one of them since that sign went up; but how about the citizen of our village who, for a measly five dollars a year, rents his lot for this disfigurement? And how about us, the community, who bow to some fetish about the sanctity of personal property, and let him do it? Is it because we are all so greedy that we dare not interfere with

another's grabbing? Or is it that we are still callous to beauty, after all, and these signs do not hurt us? I had hoped, hearing so much of the Columbia Highway, and the enormous motor taxes Oregonians were willing to pay in order to put it through, that the state would have the courage to wipe out the sign-board pest. But they have only partially done it. They have kept the sign-boards out of the gorge, but not out of the quieter, pastoral landscape through which you must pass to reach the gorge, and which could have a charm and beauty of its own.

At any rate, these sign-boards reminded me painfully of the East. They screamed to me, in huge type and lurid colors, of crowds and cities and the ugly blotches man has made on the fair face of Nature. They said my camping days were over, and a hot, stuffy train awaited me, to take me home. How wonderful, I thought, is modern industrialism! Sign after sign rose up beside the highway, blotting out a vista of the river or a pretty group of trees, or the level rows of an orchard, to inform me of the merits of various " national products " which are advertised by identical sign-boards three thousand miles away, staring at me whenever I take a train to New York, or drive to the next town to play golf. Wonderful, thrice wonderful indus-

trialism! It can make Oregon as ugly as Massachusetts! Let us speed up production. Let us turn out ever vaster quantities of tires and chewing gum, and blot out ever more beautiful vistas in our greed to sell them. Thus shall we become a prosperous and happy people, with plenty of leisure to enjoy Nature—if, by that time, we can see any of it, between the sign-boards.

That is just about how I felt as our car slid into Portland, and my vacation was over.

THE END

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